A TALK WITH CHURCH MEMBERS

BY DANIEL KAUFFMAN

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REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION

"Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

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TO OUR DEPARTED BROTHER
JOHN S. COFFMAN

Whom the Lord called home to his reward, through whose labors I was led to accept my Saviour, and whose memory is still cherished by the many who were encouraged to a noble Christian life through the influence of his teaching and example

THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

CONTENTS

PREFACE

INTRODUCTORY

Two kingdoms—What it means to be a church-member — The church the home of the Christian. 13-19

OBEDIENCE

A few references from the Bible—Obedience, why—Results of obedience. 20-26

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

Three uses—Forbid, make, let—Let your light shine, why? 27-33

IN THE HOME

Prayer—Love—Literature—Moral instruction—What the home should be. 34-40

IN THE CHURCH SERVICE

Attitude of worship — Personal conduct — Our part in the services—Results of spiritual services. 41-46

IN SOCIETY

Natural to seek associations—Good society or none—Principles governing the Christian in society—Summary of facts. 47-54

IN BUSINESS

The most urgent need — Business principles—"For conscience sake." 55-63

STUDY OF THE BIBLE

When to study the Bible — How to study the Bible — Facts about Bible-reading — No excuse for ignorance. 64-69

LIBERAL GIVING

What the Bible says—Amount of giving—Motives in giving—Tithing—Blessedness of liberal giving. 70-78

THAT "UNRULY MEMBER"

Idle words—So-called "white lies"—Filthy communication — Neighborhood gossip — Scolding—The tongue the index of the heart. 79-85

HOLD YOUR TEMPER

Things not to be found in an enraged man—Why control the temper—We can if we will—How get rid of a high temper. 86-90

SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT

Egotism—Extravagance—Personal adornment—Ambition—Covetousness and selfrighteousness. 91-99

SELF-DENIAL

A Bible doctrine—Self-denial exemplified—Bearing the cross — No cross, no crown — The power of self-denial. 100-106

THE SABBATH

Remember the Sabbath — Keep it holy — Rest from your work—Make it a rule. 107-115

PRAYER

"Pray without ceasing"—God answers prayer—Family worship — Prayer in church — The blessedness of prayer. 116-124

OUR YOUNG DISCIPLES

"Let no man despise thy youth" — "Be thou an example" — "In word" — "In conversation"—"In charity"—"In spirit"—"In faith"—"In purity" — Young people the hope of the church. 125-131

EVERY CHRISTIAN A WORKER

Reasons why we should be in His active service—Diversity of gifts for divers kinds of work — Do what you can — Necessity for Christian work. 131-138

CONCLUSION 139-141

SCRIPTURE TEXTS 145-160

POINTS FOR REFLECTION 161-166

PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

It is now over a year since the first edition of this book was exhausted. Owing to repeated demands for more copies, and believing that it will be upbuilding to the Church and glorifying to God to keep these "Talks" alive in our homes by means of the printed page, we publish this second edition.

When we wrote J. S. Shoemaker, the former publisher of this book, for permission to get out a new edition, he replied, "I have no objections whatever but would encourage the Mennonite Book and Tract Society to do so, because it is a book that should be in the hands of every member of the church."

If there is any one thing above another that will make the church a mighty power in the hands of God for the pulling down of the strongholds of sin in the world, we believe it is a *bold* and *consistent* stand for Truth on the part of *every* church member. This book will certainly help in that direction. We, therefore,

most gladly lend our efforts to send this volume to every home where it will receive a welcome.

Trusting that God's blessing may go with these messages, we send forth this Revised and Enlarged Edition of "A Talk with Church Members" for your careful reading and prayerful consideration.

THE PUBLISHERS.

PREFACE

This little volume was prepared as a companion to "MANUAL OF BIBLE DOCTRINES." The theme of the former volume is DOCTRINE; of the one before you, PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIFE. The former volume was prepared with a view to calling attention to those doctrines most clearly taught in God's word, and setting forth the necessity of accepting them. The present volume aims to set forth Christian duty as applied to daily life, with the hope that the thoughts herein presented may be considered prayerfully in the light of God's word.

The thoughts herein presented are addressed to "church members," because church membership implies separation from the world, and a desire to walk in the ways of God. The implied difference between those who unite with the church and those who do not, is this: the first class recognizes duty, and tries to follow its path; the second recog-

nizes duty, but counts Christian duty secondary to following "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Recognizing that a different line of thought is needed to reach each class, we have chosen to address ourselves to one class exclusively.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to our dearly beloved and lamented brother, J. S. Coffman, for assistance rendered during the preparation of this volume, and to J. S. Shoemaker, who assumed the responsibility of publication, and whose assistance otherwise deserves special recognition.

With gratitude toward an all-wise Father for His sustaining grace during the preparation of this volume, and with the hope that the same spirit of welcome with which the former volume was received may mark the reception of the present one, we submit this for the perusal of the reading public. D. K.

INTRODUCTORY

My Christian Friends: Whatever may be said of our likes and dislikes, our aims and our names, one thing is true of us all; if we are true Christians, we are all church-members. If we are members of the invisible church of which Christ is the Head, as well as members of the visible church which God has instituted as the temporal home of His people on earth, we have especial cause for rejoicing. We shall not question the motives of any of us in connecting ourselves with any organization, but shall consider the fact that we are church-members as evidence that we mean to be in the service of the Lord.

TWO KINGDOMS

A careful study of God's word convinces us that there are two great kingdoms, and that all people are subjects of one or the other of them. At the head of one kingdom is God, while Satan is at the head of the other kingdom. All men have the liberty to choose between these two kingdoms, and to serve the master whom they choose. God has set His price upon the human soul; so has Satan. To contrast these prices, let us imagine ourselves upon a boundless plain,

upon which is assembled an innumerable company, comprising the whole human family. We hear a voice that rings out clear and plain:

"Almighty God, Creator of the universe, Ruler of heaven and earth, what is Thy price for a human soul?"

Back from the throne of heaven comes the answer: "My price is already paid. I sent my Son into the world, and freely offered Him as a ransom for the sins of the world. His blood has canceled the debt, and salvation is now free to all who will accept it. They who accept this blood as the price for their redemption shall enter my service, be freed from the pangs of a guilty conscience, have the burden of sin removed, have the conflicts of life lightened by leaning on the strong arm of their Savior, enjoy the exercise of the noblest faculties of the mind, have their hearts filled with the Holy Comforter and thrilled with hopes of immortal glory, and finally reap the rewards of the faithful in the haven of eternal rest."

"Satan, thou vile deceiver, thou pretended angel of light, thou roaring lion, what is thy price for a human soul?"

Like the voice of a thousand demons comes the satanic response: "I tempt and deceive my subjects with visions which are never real, and with promises which I never intend to fulfil. I

draw the picture of Christianity as dark as I can make it, and paint sin in its brightest colors. I have a lot of my followers in the church, that the world may see that church-members are no better than other people. I encourage my subjects to consume themselves in their sinful lusts. I rob my victims of rest, health, morals, honor, self-respect, and finally, when there is nothing left about them worth robbing, I pick up their detestable forms and cast them into a lake of fire and fury, where in shame and remorse and disgrace they suffer the intensest agonies and pangs and torments of an endless hell!"

Such is the choice which is set before us. That any intelligent being can be found who prefers the latter proposition, is one of the marvels of the age; yet so skilful is Satan in his deception of men that the great mass of humanity is today found on the broad road which leads to eternal ruin! Not only this, but many who for a time have had their eyes open to their condition have been lulled to sleep again and are destroying their souls in all the awfulness of sinful indulgence. We who have accepted the offer which comes from the courts of high heaven have great reasons to rejoice because of our deliverance from sin, and a great duty to perform in telling our fellow men of the love of God and His power to save.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHURCH-MEMBER

Since the church is a divine institution it means more to be a church-member than some people seem to realize. It means that we have realized our condition and appealed to God for mercy; that we have forsaken the world with its sins and follies, have accepted the blood of Jesus as the atonement for our sins, and are now working in the organization which God has instituted for the furtherance of His kingdom on earth. It means that "the old man is crucified with his affections and lusts," and that we have put on the new man which after God is created in "righteousness and true holiness." It means that we have forsaken our sinful ways, whatever our sins may have been, have made restitution where restitution is possible, and are now striving, by the help of God, to do that only which is pleasing in His sight. In short, it means that we no longer follow the sinful, selfish, go-as-you-please, along-with-the-current, anything-for-pleasure course of the ungodly, but that we, by God's grace, are living pious, holy, consecrated lives, shunning that which is wrong, doing that which is right, endeavoring, in the spirit of divine grace, to discharge our full duty to ourselves, to our fellow-beings and to our God.

My friends, if church-membership does not mean all this for us, there is something wrong

somewhere. God intended His organization as the home, not of unconverted, but of converted people. Any organization which does not teach complete separation from the world, and an entire consecration to God, falls short of the Gospel standard. Any individual who stops short of this, stops short of his Christian privilege and duty. We make these statements emphatic, because they are facts which are plainly taught in the word of God, and should be indelibly stamped upon every human heart. May God deliver us from a make-believe religion. We want the real.

THE CHURCH THE HOME OF THE CHRISTIAN

Our Lord Jesus came to save His people from their sins. As fast as they are being saved, He directs them to His organization, the church. As volunteers who rise to defend their country connect themselves with the army of their country, so the volunteers for Christ connect themselves with the army of God. Let no one imagine himself to be a soldier of the cross while he is unwilling to become a part of the organization which God provided for His soldiers on earth. The very fact that people remain outside the pale of the church proves that they are not volunteers for Christ. It should be remembered, however, that we do not become Christians in consequence of our uniting with the church, but

that we unite with the church in consequence of our becoming Christians. As people throw off the shackles of sin, they enlist under the banner of King Emmanuel, where they are united in a common cause.

The church is not merely a society organization for the convenience and pleasure of those who may wish to unite with it. It is the visible part of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, designed for the earthly home of converted souls, and governed by such ordinances, restrictions and admonitions as God saw fit to record in His Book.

To those who find themselves in the church, but know themselves to be addicted to the sins of the world, we would say: Get right with God. Leave off your sinful ways. Pray that your sins may be blotted out, and that grace may be given you to lead a consistent life. Do not treat the question of Christian duty lightly. It will prove your ruin. Live true to God, and heaven will be your reward. But if any of you *will* serve the devil rather than God; if you *will* live in sin rather than follow after righteousness; if you *will* turn a deaf ear to the pleadings of friends on earth, and close your eyes to the teaching of your great Friend in heaven, then relieve the church of the burden of carrying hypocrites, and step right out into the world where you belong.

Satan's subjects in the church are doing the cause of Christ more harm than his subjects outside the church.

But all honor to those who love the Savior's name, are serving Him to the best of their knowledge, and walking in all the light which God gives them. Your cause is a noble one, and heaven rejoices at your efforts. May the influence of your lives be a means of inspiration to others. May each succeeding step bring you more abundant grace, and lead you higher into the realms of spiritual life. That something may be presented in the succeeding chapters which will be a means of encouragement to you, and at the same time awaken some of those whom the gods of this world have caused to slumber, is the earnest wish of your unworthy fellow-pilgrim.

THE AUTHOR.

OBEDIENCE

Among the first essentials to a Christian life is obedience. Faith in God means submission to His will. Submission to His will means obedience to His word. An idea of the importance which the inspired writers place upon the grace of obedience may be had by taking a glance at

A FEW REFERENCES FROM THE BIBLE

"To obey is better than sacrifice."—I Sam. 15:22.

"If ye love me, keep my commandments."—Jno. 14:15.

"Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."—Jno. 15:14.

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin."—Jas. 4:17.

"He that says, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."—I Jno. 2:4.

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."—Eccl. 12:13.

OBEDIENCE, WHY?

Time and space will not permit mention of

all the reasons why every one should seek to be obedient to God in all things. However, there are four reasons which at this time especially impress us, and these we shall endeavor to give.

1. *God demands it.* The texts already quoted settle this point. When Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," He lovingly taught His disciples of all ages that this is the divinely appointed way of showing our love to God. God gives no commandments for ornamental purposes. Every one of them is of momentous importance, and we can not leave a single one of them undone without injury to ourselves. If disobedience to the laws of the land is considered a crime of such great magnitude that it is punishable with imprisonment and in certain cases with death, what must be the magnitude of the great sin of disobedience to the laws of God? When God speaks, let every human soul obey.

2. *God knows best.* Our eternal destiny is in His hands. His wisdom and power and love are such that it goes without saying that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." The Bible furnishes abundant proof that whenever men have set aside the wisdom of God and substituted their own wisdom instead, they invariably met with disaster. Adam and Eve allowed the devil to make them believe they

knew more about it than God did, and brought the disgrace of sin and death upon themselves and the human family. The antediluvians forgot their God, and were swept away in the flood. Nadab and Abihu started to worship after their own notion, and were consumed with fire from heaven. King Saul ignored the command of the Lord, and lost his kingdom. The Jewish nation forsook the pure worship of Jehovah, and were scattered to the four winds of earth. These are a few of the many instances on record which prove the folly of substituting our own wisdom for the superior wisdom of God. All that we have, and all that we are, we have and are by the grace of God, whose care for His own is so great, and whose wisdom is so unerring, that we never make a mistake by accepting His leadership and following Him continually in loving obedience.

3. *Obedience to God means a union of the obedient.* It is not necessary at this time to dwell upon the fact that a union of forces means strength, while disunion means weakness. This truth is written in the career of all nations, and the best authors, editors, and preachers have proclaimed and emphasized this fact. The world will never be conquered for God until all the people will enlist under the same banner, will be filled with and guided by the same Spirit, and

accept the leadership of God in fact as well as in theory.

There is but one basis upon which God's people are consistently united, and that is a basis of absolute surrender to God. God will sanctify no other union. Any other union means a sacrifice of truth and compromise with sin, which in itself would defeat the very object of salvation. Nearly all the divisions in the church may be traced to the world-compromising element in the make-up of pretended Christians. So long as there are any professed Christians who reject any part of God's word there will be, and ought to be, divisions in the church. But let all the professed followers of Christ be soundly converted, so that there will be none who would sacrifice Gospel truth for the sake of public opinion, or refuse to surrender their will to the will of God; let all of self be taken away, God's will be submitted to at all times, every vestige of worldliness be driven from every heart, and every heart be filled with love to God, His people and His cause —we will be surprised how soon our differences of opinion will vanish, and how soon His all-powerful love will melt us into one strong, united, spiritually-minded organization.

4. *There are no promises in the Bible for the disobedient.* The Bible is full of precious promises; but not one of them is for the disobedient,

except on condition of repentance. God makes provisions for human weakness. The doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, so clearly set forth in the word of God, is a source of consolation to every earnest Christian whose consciousness of weakness might otherwise lead him to despair. Our Savior lovingly reassures us that "*He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me,* HATH EVERLASTING LIFE." But while God is generous with those who humbly strive to do His will and serve Him "in spirit and in truth," He has not one comforting promise for those who reject His word. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

RESULTS OF OBEDIENCE

Obedient children of God hold themselves in readiness to do whatever He wishes them to do. Obedient servants often do things which their masters would rather not have done, but only through ignorance of what their real duty is. When once enlightened, they are willing to make matters right, and are careful not to repeat the offense. This expresses our relations toward our heavenly Master, if we are His obedient servants.

The first result of obedience to God is the denial of self. Our will is surrendered, and God's

will is accepted in its stead. This causes a struggle. Satan is not willing to relinquish his grasp without a struggle. The desires of the flesh, so very dear to the carnal mind, die hard. To crucify the old man causes agony. But the grace of God is sufficient to sustain us in every trial, and the less we waver, the easier our victory over sin. Even after our conversion the "flesh-pots of Egypt" are set so near to us that we are conscious of a yearning after them; but in answer to prayer God will take away our sinful desires, and give us power to resist temptation. As we continue in the service of God, the power of temptation over us becomes weaker, and our conflict with sin assumes the form of a triumph rather than that of a struggle.

God never takes anything from us without substituting something very much better. Being obedient to the will of God, we follow Him wheresoever He leads us. This takes us out of the mire of sin, makes us "free from the law of sin and death," gives us an armor which enables us to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked," and makes us in the highest degree the benefactors of mankind. It lifts our enjoyment from the low level of sinful indulgence to the lofty heights of heavenly peace within the soul. But the crowning result of obedience will be realized when, after having crossed the river which sepa-

rates time from eternity, we stand in the hallowed presence of our Maker, and hear the blissful words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom."

We never lose anything by leaving the sins of earth to become obedient to the voice from heaven. For every one who faithfully bears the cross on earth, there is a glorious crown in heaven.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

God's obedient children will find food for thought in our Savior's first commandment given in His Sermon on the Mount, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Jesus Himself set the example. Wherever He went, He was the same meek, unassuming, loving, sympathetic, zealous, pure, perfect, powerful Being—the great Light, sent from heaven to dispel the darkness of this world, and fill it with the ineffable light of glory. Having set the example, He says to His followers, "Ye are the light of the world . . . . . let your light shine."

His earthly mission being fulfilled, He is again at the right hand of God, interceding for us. We are His witnesses, left upon earth to shine with the light which He has so graciously given us. If we are His true followers, our lights, though borrowed and dimmed by human imperfections, will radiate to the world around us. The life and light of Christ in the soul are very essential. Without this, no one could shine with the true light. There are

which we may make of this light: (1) We may hide it under a bushel. (2) We may display an imitation of it before the world. (3) We may simply *let* it shine. These three uses may be illustrated as follows:

We will suppose three characters, John Jones, John Brown and John Smith, who settle in the same neighborhood, and present their letters to the same congregation.

1. John Jones is very careful that no one should think him "pious." He is never heard to pray, avoids conversation on religious topics, seldom reads the Bible, attends a pleasure party in preference to a prayer-meeting or Gospel service, seeks companionship among worldly associates, and acts very inconsistently in other ways. The only evidence that any one has that he makes any pretentions to Christianity is that he admits that he "belongs to church." His light (if he has any) is so securely hidden under a bushel that it can not long remain there without going out altogether.

2. John Brown is quite the opposite of John Jones. He considers it an honor to be known as a great church worker. He boasts of his piety, and loves to tell of his wonderful experiences and mighty achievements. He sneers at those less accomplished than himself, and puts himself for-

ward whenever and wherever possible. His polished appearance and prepossessing manners give him the "right-of-way," and soon he is regarded as a remarkably pious man, and becomes the hero of the hour.

This is bringing out the light in a brilliant display; but in this emblazoned light some dark spots appear. It is soon discovered that his professions and his life do not tell the same story. As he becomes better known, it becomes more and more apparent that his piety was mostly "put on," his ability mostly in his own imagination, and that his zeal was born of an ardent desire to have his fellow-men praise him.

3. Of a different character is John Smith. He is content to be a humble worker for Jesus. His first appearance in the new congregation is scarcely noticed; but his excellent deportment soon begins to count. He is never known to indulge in foolish or vulgar talk, or to become entangled in neighborhood gossip. He never talks reproachfully of any one, and in all that he does he shows himself to be straightforward and conscientious. These things are noticed by other people, and the more he is tried, the more he is trusted. The world respects him for his genuine Christian qualities, and the church is delighted to find in him a worthy member, who can be depended upon to do his best in whatever task is

laid upon him. It is the genuine Christian, letting his light shine.

FORBID, MAKE, LET

These three words spring into notice as we study the character of the three classes of people, representatives of which we have just described.

1. Some people *forbid* to let their lights shine. They are willing to be counted members of the church; but the church must not expect anything else from them. Talk about their weakness in social or business lines, and you insult them. Talk about their weakness in religious work, and they allow the criticism to pass by unnoticed. The church must not interfere with their business or their pleasure, their filthy and sinful habits, or any other of their pet sins. The moment you demand anything of them that any one might reasonably expect of a converted Christian, they talk about leaving the church and going where they can have more "liberty."

Poor, deluded souls! They imagine that they can hide their light under a bushel; but the fact is they can not long keep it there without putting it out. When the final voice is heard, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," they will find that not only is there no light there, but that like the foolish virgins, even the oil will be gone. Christ says, "If any man will not deny himself, and

take up his cross, and follow me daily, he is not worthy of me."

2. Some people, not content to let the life of God shine through their lives, strive to *make* their lights shine. Like the John Brown of our illustration, and like the Pharisees of old, they love to sound a trumphet before men. Their chief ambition seems to be that they are Christians, and Christians worthy of the uppermost seats in the synagogue. Some are conscientious in their endeavors to force their admirable qualities upon the notice of the public, while others strive to send out a light for the glory or the revenue which it brings.

3. After all, the wisest thing to do is to take our Savior at His word and simply *let* our lights shine. God has a work for each of us. Let Him have His way, and He will lead us into the positions He wishes us to occupy and where we will be of the highest possible use to Him and His cause. These positions may not always suit us, but why should we assume to know more than God, and dictate to Him what we should or should not do? Take God at His word, follow the Spirit's guidance, accept His teaching, and He will take care of results. As instruments in the hands of God, let His will be reflected in our lives, and His doctrines embodied in the tenets of our faith. Are you questioned concerning what you believe, explain yourself

the best you can. Don't be afraid to let people know your position in regard to all questions upon which you have a position. Let people know what you think about temperance, holiness, virtue, repentance, conversion, pride, covetousness, separation from the world, or any other question upon which intelligent people should inform themselves. And then don't make the mistake of telling people what they ought to do when you yourself do not heed your own teaching. God judges many people by their own words. Don't be afraid to testify against the sins of your own neighborhood, especially popular sins. Remember that as one of God's witnesses, you are expected to stand for Gospel light and Gospel purity. What if you are called a fanatic and a crank? That is the kind of people to whom the world owes its progress. Better be right with God and wrong with the world than right with the world and wrong with God. As light shines most clearly when surrounded by darkness, so the true Christian shines brightest when in the midst of opposition and persecution. The world has suffered much, and many souls have been lost, because professed Christians have lacked the courage of their convictions, hid away their light under a bushel, and sacrificed truth for the sake of popularity. One soul, firmly rooted and grounded on the Rock, with simple courage to stand for God and His word, at all

times and under all circumstances, is worth more to the cause of Christ than a thousand half-hearted, worldlyized, honor-seeking, cowardly church-members.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE, WHY?

Christian friends, have the courage of your convictions, even if your views do happen to be unpopular. The approving smile of God is worth more than the plaudits of millions of worldlings. In whose service are we anyway, God's or the world's? Do we know why we should let our lights shine? Listen to our Saviour: "Let your light *so shine before men, that they may* SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, *and* GLORIFY YOUR FATHER *which is in heaven*". That means that the salvation of other souls besides our own depends upon what we do. It means that people are reading our lives to see if there is any reality in the religion which we profess; that if they are favorably impressed by our lives they are drawn toward God, and if unfavorable, they are driven away from God. How grand our opportunities and yet how fearful our responsibilities! God grant us grace to use the opportunities of time for glory in eternity. As the light of God shines out through the lives of His people as they live in the home, in the church, in society, in business, and wherever they go, the world becomes convinced that religion is real, and many are led from darkness to light.

IN THE HOME

It is said that religion ought to begin at home. No statement can be nearer the truth. Religion should not only *begin* at home, but also *abide* there.

No spot is more to be prized than a model Christian home. Tell me the character of the average home, and I'll tell you the character of the average citizen. Tell me the character of the average Christian home, and I'll tell you the character of the average church. It is said that the Sunday school is "the nursery of the church." The home is the nursery, both of the church and the Sunday school. Too much cannot be said concerning the importance of bringing our homes up to the highest possible degree of excellence. That home upon which the Lord can depend as a missionary center in which the Gospel is installed into the hearts of the children, and from which proceeds the light of the Gospel, carried forth by workers, literature, money, and consistent living—stands as a mighty bulwark of faith which God can use in the extension of His kingdom on earth and His glory in eternity. Such a

home is invariably noted as a house of

PRAYER

When we say "prayer," we mean grace at the table, family worship, and such private and secret prayer as the Spirit may move each individual to offer. It is the foremost mark of a model Christian family. It is as natural for a child of God to pray as it is for a natural child to ask favors of and to adore its earthly parents. What is true of a Christian individual is true of a Christian family.

Some well-meaning people who say that they believe that family worship is a good practice, neglect it because they think they haven't time. The idea is a mistaken one. Which is the more important, the welfare of the soul or of the body? Christian parents, there is a heartache for every opportunity which you neglect along this line. Neglect your business, neglect your personal comfort, neglect *everything* rather than the religious training of your children. With the best of care on your part, they may be overcome with worldly influences. How much more liable is this to occur when you neglect them! I don't believe that any one ever lost a cent by having family devotions regularly. But even if it meant a great financial loss, what is that compared with the loss of the souls of our children? There are other ways in which

we can look after the spiritual needs of our children besides family worship; but there is nothing which can take its place. Family worship should be regarded as a sacred duty, never to be neglected.

While we emphasize the importance of family prayers, we would not lose sight of the value of secret prayer. It is a power which no one can estimate.

What means the awakened conscience and troubled feeling and conviction of this wretched sinner who for years has scarcely thought of home, nor mentioned the name of God except in blasphemy? It is the influence of mother's prayers, who at this time is in her closet upon her knees pouring out her petitions in the presence of the Eye which never sleeps and the Ear which always hears. Secret prayer! It is the power which ascends beyond the starry heavens and takes hold of the Throne on high; the power that wipes out both distance and rank, and moves with conviction the hearts of the most hardened sinner. Heaven alone is able to tell the number of souls who have been won, and who will be won through the silent influence of secret prayer.

LOVE

is another characteristic of a model Christian family. It is the bond which sanctifies the union between husband and wife, makes duty a pleasure,

and binds the children to the first commandment with promise. It drives gloom from the heart, lightens the cares of the household, and makes a paradise of home. Happy the family in which the bond of law is securely hidden in a bond of love.

LITERATURE

Every home should be well supplied with good literature. First in the list of books is the "Book of Books." After this, books whose teachings are in harmony with the Bible, Sunday school literature, church papers, and books and papers designated for religious and moral instruction and literary culture should be supplied. Newspapers should be few and selected with care. Sensational literature should be discarded as being unfit to enter Christian homes. Novels are a nuisance. Sunday newspapers should not be patronized, and the postoffice should be left in peace on the Lord's day.

Children should be provided with literature—books and papers—written in simple language—language which is easily read and easily comprehended. Some books are excellent for men and women of mature minds, but useless for children. A simple mind needs simple diet. Books written especially for boys and girls, and carefully selected by those competent to discern between safe and dangerous literature, should find a place in every home. Develop in your

children a taste for pure literature, and the danger of being led into fields of vice is thereby diminished.

In the selection of any kind of literature, beware of false teachings. In this fast age, when almost every mail sends out new publications; when books and tracts and magazines and pamphlets and papers are scattered broadcast all over this land, and at prices so low that no one need be without anything to read; when almost every conceivable doctrine is sent forth in the name of religion, and championed by able men, there is especial reason why we should be on our guard. Of all the dangerous literature now being distributed, the most dangerous is that which is mostly truth, but mixed with enough untruth to make it ruinous. It is this kind of literature which often poisons the minds and souls of conscientious but unsuspecting people before they are aware of what has happened. This has been the devil's trick ever since he beguiled our first parents. Again we say, beware of false teaching! Better feed your children arsenic or strychnine than to permit them, through your carelessness, to make moral and spiritual wrecks of themselves by reading poisonous literature. Better live on scanty food than to have food in abundance but mixed with poison.

MORAL INSTRUCTION

Religious instruction includes instruction in

morals. Religion without morality is a farce. No moralist is ever more moral than a true Christian. Children should early learn to appreciate this fact. Surrounded with vice on every hand, a safeguard should be thrown around them. Parents should early instruct them in those paths which lead to true manhood and true womanhood and warn them against the dangers and follies of vice in every form. Profane and vulgar language should be prohibited at all times, and our children kept away (as far as possible) from impure conversation, impure literature, obscene pictures, and evil associates. It is a crime for parents to allow their daughters who are still under their control to associate with men of degraded morals. It is a crime for parents to allow their sons to visit pool-rooms, saloons, gambling dens, places of questionable amusement, and dens of vice, so long as there is a possible way of preventing it. It is an outrage on common decency to decorate the walls of the home with pictures clad in such a way as to encourage lust. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Christian parents, post yourselves on the dangers which surround your children, and then exercise all diligence in instructing them, both by precept and by example.

WHAT THE CHRISTIAN HOME SHOULD BE

Since the Christian home is the place where

useful citizens and noble Christians are developed, no pains should be spared to make it as Christ-like as possible. Let the sunshine of cheerful faces, the instruction of intelligent conversation and useful books, the tender ties of warmest love, and the cultivation of sterling Christian virtues, be among its most prominent features. Whatever our position in the family, let our duties be studied and practiced. God instituted marriage for the well-being of man. Let His directions be followed and His name will be glorified and His cause flourish in every Christian home.

IN THE CHURCH SERVICE

Some people have a mistaken idea concerning the real objects of church services. They seem to regard the church as a kind of social institution, and the services designed for their entertainment. In their estimation, a fervent prayer or a heart-searching sermon is but a brilliant oratorical effort, and soul-thrilling music is but a delightful exercise. If the sermon and music are rendered in popular style, they seem highly gratified; but if the poor preacher fails to strike an enchanting chord, or the music happens to be of the common-place variety, they go away disappointed.

It is a blessed thing to be permitted, frequently to listen to spirit-stirring sermons, or to listen or take part in soul-inspiring music. Such are some of the delightful experiences of the children of God. When received in the proper spirit, such services are truly upbuilding. It should be understood, however, that the service is not intended for the comfort of those who seek no higher purpose than to enjoy an intellectual or carnal feast, but rather for the spiritual enlightenment and upbuilding of all who come

within its influence. The church of Christ is a working body, of which the church-service is the most active center. Every member should feel that the service is for the enlightenment of the whole congregation, and that upon him or her rests a portion of the responsibility for its success or failure.

ATTITUDE OF WORSHIP

In the first place, the house of worship should be considered a sacred place, dedicated to the service of the Lord. We should feel that "surely God is in this place." No light, frivolous talking or jesting; no display of fine clothes; no talking about crops or business or vain amusements. Conscious of the fact that we are about to engage in worship, our eyes and ears should be closed to the world, and centered upon God.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

We are ready to admit that all should be orderly at church. "Let all things be done decently and in order." All unnecessary noise, either before, during or after service, should be avoided. Remember to be on hand at the beginning of the service lest you disturb the interest by coming in after the services have commenced. Should any come in late your turning around and staring at them will neither help you nor the preacher nor the ones who are coming in. When the beginning of the services is announc-

ed, those not already seated should find seats as soon as they can conveniently. Right here it might not be out of place to say that it is not a good practice to stand outside the church awhile before going in even if services have not already begun. Better be inside praying for the success of the meeting. In finding seats it is well to select a place that others do not have to crowd past us to find a place to sit down. Whispering during services shows a want of proper respect. Going in and out when not necesssary indicates a want of good manners. Sleeping during services indicates a lack of interest. "Cutting up" during services indicates a lack of good sense.

OUR PART IN THE SERVICES

It is a mistake to think that only ministers should have part in the services. Every lover of the cause should feel that there is something for him to do. Following are some of the ways in which we may assist:

1. *Singing.* There is nothing which can take the place of soul-inspiring music. In this connection, we rise to record our votes in favor of good old-fashioned singing in preference to our modern rattling, operatic music. When the soul wells forth in the service of song, it is a most delightful way of praising the Lord, and a most effective form of Christian work. Souls that the most eloquent and touching sermons

were unable to move have been reached through the power of song. Thank God for the privilege of singing.

2. *Prayer.* Let the prayers of the whole congregation ascend to God, that the minister may be sustained in his efforts, that the truth may be fearlessly and forcibly and clearly presented, and that the hearts of the hearers may be properly prepared to receive, grasp and apply the truth as presented. "The fervent effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

Speaking of prayer we might say a word with reference to posture. We know of places where the minister says, "Let the congregation kneel in prayer." The minister and perhaps a half dozen of the more pious members constitute the congregation, while the rest are spectators—sitting up as complacently as if the kneeling going on were a mere performance designed for their entertainment. We ask, what is this? If all who refuse to kneel made no pretentions to Christianity, we could explain it; but since we see scores of Christian professors refuse to kneel, we leave the explanation to them. Humble hearts and prostrate knees are very closely related.

3. *Careful attention.* An attentive congregation gets more out of a sermon than an inattentive one for two reasons: (1) With all eyes fixed on the minister and eagerly listening to what he has to

say, he is helped wonderfully, and he preaches a better sermon than he would if not supported in this way. (2) It is idle to expect much from the best of sermons when our minds are wandering off in some other direction, or when we spend in slumberland the time we ought to devote to what is being said.

4. *Speaking an opportune word either before or after service.* "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." It may take just a word from you, added to what the minister has said, to bring some wandering soul to Christ. Many have been won in this way.

RESULTS OF SPIRITUAL SERVICE

With the minister and his congregation united with prayerful hearts, all cheered with spiritual songs, and moved by the Holy Spirit to worship God in true devotion, who can doubt the blessedness and richness of the service? O for more services where all the professed children of God are moved and filled with the Spirit-power! How the sleeping church members would waken up! How the excuses for staying away would stop! How sinners would start heavenward under the convicting power of the Gospel! How the schisms and isms and contentions and rankling feelings would vanish from church work! How criticisms and imperfect sermons would be turned into praises for God for the privilege of listening to gospel truth regardless of how the sermon

was delivered! These would be some of the effects resulting from a proper conception of what a church service ought to be, and a conscientious exercise of duty on the part of God's believing children. God's cause has always prospered when the Holy Spirit has had full sway in the hearts of His followers.

Good people have lamented that the spirit of worship is not what it should be among Christian professors, and wondered how the defect might be remedied. It is easier to suggest a remedy than to effect a reformation; but it seems to me that the proper place to begin is with ourselves. Let us draw nearer to God, learn more of His word, and we shall see more of God's greatness and our own nothingness. God is ready to fill with His Spirit all who are ready to be emptied of self. The Spirit of God and the spirit of worldiness can not dwell in the same heart. The Holy Spirit made manifest among the children of men is the same everywhere. Persons who are full of the Spirit are earnest, pious, zealous, humble, obedient, consecrated, consistent, conscientious, worshipful. God speed the day when every church-member will do his full share in striving to make the church service what it should be, and when the unanimous testimony of those in atendance will be, "Lord, it is good for us to be here;" "Surely God is in this place."

IN SOCIETY

It is our life which impresses others with the sincerity or insincerity of our professions.

We say that religion is something powerful; that it exerts influence in transforming degraded servants of sin into noble workers for God. Our testimony is right; and those who make no pretentions to having undergone such a transformation have a right to expect in Christian professors something which they themselves do no possess. They ask. "Wherein do you differ from us? What is the effect of your religion upon your conversation? upon your business methods? upon your personal habits? upon your life in the home? upon your conduct toward the poor? upon your work in the church? upon your conduct in society?"

These are legitimate questions. While we know that religion is a condition of the soul rather than the sum total of outward actions, we also know that the right condition of the soul makes itself manifest in the right kind of outward actions. If our religion does not make itself manifest in every walk of life, there is something wrong somewhere. "The tree is known by its fruit." There are many ways in

which we may exert an influence for good or for evil; and probably no place where our influence is so decided as in society.

NATURAL TO SEEK ASSOCIATIONS

When God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone," He uttered a truth which applied not only to the marriage question, but to every department in life. That it is God's will that man should seek the association of his fellow man, is evident for a number of reasons: (1) God's church being a society of His people, we conclude that it is His will that His people should work as an organized body rather than as individuals. (2) The family is another evidence that God favors such associations. (3) Good society has a refining and ennobling influence over every one within its circle. (4) Take people away from the influence of society, and they eventually become gloomy, morose, suspicious, superstitious, immoral, irreligious, brutish.

Sociability is God-given and should be cultivated, not discouraged. It is the beam of light which may open the way for the more perfect joy of salvation. Founded upon the desire for the well-being of others, it is the sympathetic tie which moves us to share the fortunes and misfortunes of others. When used to the glory of God, it wields a powerful influence in win-

ning souls for His kingdom. It is a gift which every one should covet.

GOOD SOCIETY OR NONE

Since people will seek associations (and it is God's will that they should) care should be taken that these associations should be of the right kind. It is a serious loss to be deprived of the privileges of good society. It is much more serious to be robbed of a good character through the vitiating influences of evil associaciates. The greater the blessing, the greater the curse will become when the blessing is wrongly applied. Thus sociability has been made to serve the meanest of the devil's purposes. Society, which God intended for culture, the enjoyment and the uplifting of His people, has, in many localities, been instrumental in sapping the life out of churches, robbing many people of their virtue, and bringing ruin and disgrace upon many who might otherwise have become the flower of manhood and womanhood. Society is a necessity; but let it be remembered that unless it is kept on a Christian basis, it is a curse rather than a blessing.

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CHRISTIAN IN SOCIETY

1. *Remember that you are a Christian.* Christ had occasion to mingle with publicans and sinners; but he never lost His identity, neither did

He ever associate with them as being one of them. Wherever He went, He was the same meek, patient, loving, unassuming, righteous Man, the princely Prince of Peace, whose admirable traits of character won for Him the admiration of the simple and the enmity of the proud. His example is worthy of imitation. Whether in the homes of the rich or the poor, the refined or the vulgar, the godly or the ungodly; whether in domestic, social or religious circles, we should be careful that our language and our actions are always becoming for a true child of God.

2. *Have no part in any worldly gatherings which you have reasons to believe Jesus would not attend were He present in body.*. It is one thing to be sociable with worldly people and showing yourself to be their friend. It is quite another thing to associate with them in their sinful practices, thereby putting the stamp of approval upon their course, and confirming them in the feeling that what they are doing is not so bad after all. Christ says, "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." What is true of individuals is true of gatherings. Any gathering which does not tend to make people better is unsafe or unfit for any one to attend. It is always safe for Christian people to stay away from places where the object is to have "a good time." What the world calls "a good

time" is anything but a good time for spiritual growth.

3. *Avoid any society in which money and personal appearance, rather than character, is taken as the standard.* Where wealth is considered the first requisite, while character is considered a secondary matter, you may be sure that character will be sold that the coveted goal —wealth and grandeur—may be attained. This accounts for the questionable morality of most of the so-called "first circles" of society. This "high society" is highly polished on the outside, but inwardly it is a cess-pool of moral rottenness. Any society in which the drunkard, the saloon-keeper and the gambler are admitted because of their wealth and aristocratic bearing, is unfit for the association of respectable people; for where gilded vice is preferred before honest poverty, no human being can long remain without becoming polluted with moral leprosy.

It is idle to contend that society can not be constructed upon a Christian basis; for in a land where churches count their members by the thousands and by the millions, it is an outrage upon common decency and a sin before God for the churches to throw up their hands and allow the world to dictate what shall or shall not be allowed in society. The doors of society should be open to all people—on condition that moral

reprobates undergo a reformation before they are admitted to good standing.

4. *Show yourself a friend to the poor.* Inasmuch as poverty is by many looked upon as a disgrace, the poor need our especial sympathy and encouragement. In this our Savior set a conspicuous example. Read His advice about bidding guests to the feast (Luke 14:12-14), also what He has to say concerning those who will be surprised on the last day (Matt. 25).

5. *Be willing to help make society what it should be.* We all enjoy good society. What are we doing to make it what it should be?

6. *"Be not equally yoked together with unbelievers."* This advice is of especial value in connection with the subject now under consideration, from the fact that most young people choose their life-companions from among their associates in society. It is of great importance that in the midst of these associations we look forward to see where these asociations may lead to. The conduct of our Christian young people in society should be such that no one would ever have reasons to suspect them of being willing to give their hearts and their hands to unbelievers. They should remember that even courtship with unbelievers is trifling with God's word. Intimate associations among young people whose aims in life are not the same often bring about a condition in which the eyes are

closed to consequences, and disastrous marriages are the result. All these could be avoided by observing proper relations in our associations.

SUMMARY OF FACTS

1. It is not good for man to be alone.

2. Sociability is a power, either for good or for evil.

3. Wherever we go, we should remember that we are Christians, and should act accordingly.

4. To have no society is not good; to be identified with the society of disreputable people is much worse.

5. Society should be organized upon a Christian basis, and its character determined by Christian people.

6. Society in which wealth rather than moral character is set up as the standard should be avoided by Christian people.

7. Gilded vice has reached and corrupted many hearts which could not have been reached by flagrant sin. Satan is in his most dangerous robe when disguised as an angel of light .

8. Parents should see that their children mingle in such society only where they may grow intellectually, morally and spiritually, and be removed as far as possible from the power of temptation.

9. Social gatherings which have for their ob-

ject that form of amusement which gratifies the carnal lusts of the sinner and encourages him in his wayward life, should not be patronized by Christian people.

10. While our Christian young people should be uniformly courteous and polite, they should avoid any kind of associations which would ever cause them to disrespect the scriptural admonition, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

IN BUSINESS

For the honorable business man, "honesty is the best policy." With the Christian, honesty is a sacred principle.

Many of the criticisms directed against church-members by "them that are without" have reference to questionable business methods. It is a sad fact, that these criticisms are not always groundless. Thus the profession of men's lips is obscured by the shadow of their own lives.

There is a great work going on today in preaching the Gospel and spreading religious literature. This is as it should be. Would to God that the missionary spirit might rise to such a height that the Gospel in its fullness would be carried to the ears of every intelligent being on the face of the globe, and the Bible find a place in every home. To accomplish this aim, it is necessary not only to tell the people the wonderful story of the Gospel, but to back the message with consistent Christian living. Along this line,

THE MOST URGENT NEED

of the present time is for Christian professors

to show in their business lives that Christ reigns in the hearts of His people. People hear the story of the Gospel, and wonder what effect it has upon those who accept it. If they find that as a rule Christian professors are engaged in useful, honorable business, and that in conducting their affairs they are temperate, truthful, charitable and conscientious, they will exert a powerful influence in convincing the world that religion is something worth having. But if, on the other hand, the world finds them "smooth-tongued," overbearing, eager to drive sharp bargains, selfish in their dealings, uncharitable to the poor, and absorbed in money-making more than in the service of the Lord, you may know that lookers-on are incredulous about the religion they profess. When Christian people show in practical life that their religion enables them to resist temptation, even in business; that while others are engaged in a selfish scramble for "filthy lucre," they, in the ordinary channels of business, seek to "glorify God in their works," the cause of Christ will have a support which nothing can shake. The plow-handle often preaches louder sermons than the pulpit.

Peter, recognizing that "actions speak louder than words," advises thus: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the

Gentiles: that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

The world gives us many excellent business principles; but it may not be generally known that the Bible also has many business principles which for wisdom and righteousness can not be excelled. In fact, so thoroughly is this subject covered in the Bible that no rule in business which has no Bible foundation is worth consideration. As a few among many, we name the following:

I. *"Lie not one to another."* It seems strange that any one should think of giving this advice to professing Christians; yet Paul saw fit to mention this to his Colossian brethren, and it is altogether possible that some American brethren could profit by the advice. Had Paul been addressing an American congregation, his language would doubtless have sounded something like this:

Don't misrepresent the stock or goods you have for sale. Don't give some excuse for doing a thing when you know that your real reason is something else. Don't tell the man you are dealing with that this is the last cent you will give (or take) and then break your word before you are through trading. Don't say

that you don't care about selling (or buying) when you know that is the very thing you want. Don't paint the future too gloomy when you are in the act of buying, or too bright when you have something to sell. Don't garble market reports. Don't contract a debt, promising to pay by a certain time, unless you are sure you can make your word good. Don't contract a debt, and then try to get out of it afterwards by pleading poverty. Don't call a man a "shylock" because he holds a note against you and expects you to make your word good. Don't employ a man to work for you, and then turn him off because you find somebody that suits you better. Don't back out of an honest bargain because you think you have the worst of it. Be as good as your word. Tell the exact truth at all times, and stick to what you say.

Christian people, tell the truth, and never tell anything else. It always pays, even when it means a financial loss to you. He who thinks less of his character than of a few dollars is unworthy the name of a Christian or the form of a man. Tell the truth. Tell it in words, tell it in deeds. Let the word HONESTY be written in bold relief across your very life. Neither poverty nor extensive business interests afford any excuse for lying. Had God thought it necessary to make any exceptions to His rule against lying, He would doubtless have record-

ed such exceptions in His Book. How can we expect other people to regard our word when we ourselves do not regard it? How can we hope to wield an influence for good when people have no confidence in what we say? Now read Rev. 21:8, and then decide whether it ever pays to lie. No, No. Let us listen to Paul, and "Lie not one to another;" neither to the world.

II. *"But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."*

There is no room in the kingdom of heaven for lazy or improvident men. The Bible proclaims against them. Man's first duty is to provide for his own—his own soul, his wife, his children, or whatever may belong to his stewardship. This we understand to apply to both temporal and spiritual affairs. God has decreed that not only should man eat his bread "in the sweat of his face," but that he should see that both he and "his own" should have something to eat.

God pity the lazy man. He can not endure hardships, nor stand against opposition. He lacks stability, throws away his best opportunities, and is a burden to church and state, as well as to himself. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise" (Prov. 6:6).

God prospers the industrious. It is seldom that His people are immensely rich or wretchedly poor; for their integrity stands in the way of unlawful gain, and industry brings them possessions. Even when adverse circumstances bring them to poverty, God has a way to relieve them of their wants before they reach starvation. When God ordained that man should care for his own, He simply required that man should do his part faithfully, to which He promised to add His blessings. To limit man to righteous means in caring for his own, God has wisely laid down a few principles, among them the following:

III. *"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."*

This principle, known as the GOLDEN RULE, needs application rather than explanation. Others have equal rights with ourselves. Aim to earn honestly every cent that you make, and in your business dealings to advance the interests of others as well as yourselves, and you will stay within bounds of this rule. The world says, "Look out for number one;" but in looking out for "number one," we must be careful that "number one" does not encroach upon the rights of "number two." Right, not Policy, should govern our business methods.

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good to all men." No better opportunity is of-

fered to apply this advice than in business affairs. In every business transaction it should be the aim to have both parties to the contract mutually benefited thereby. The temptation of striving to get something for nothing, or to get "the best end of the bargain" should be battled against by everybody. Our highest privilege in conducting our business affairs is to promote the interests and happiness of others.

So much for the basis upon which business should be conducted. Now for the kinds of business in which to engage. Paul says:

IV. *Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."*

Here is the test which should be applied to everything we undertake. Any business which, if rightly followed, will redound to the glory of God, is a legitimate business for the Christian. Before entering upon any kind of business, these questions should be prayerfully considered:

1. Can I carry it on successfully without violating Gospel principles?

2. It it a business which uplifts rather than degrades mankind?

3. Will the associations formed as a result of my engaging in this business be an advantage or a disadvantage morally and spiritually to my family or myself?

4. Can I be successful in the business and properly respect the rights of others?

5. Does it allow myself and family full privileges in carrying on religious work?

Upon the answer to these questions depends the question as to whether the business can be conducted to the glory of God. Fear not to make the test. God has promised, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and by deciding all questions from a Gospel standpoint, we will always be guided by the wisdom of high heaven, which is far better than to trust to the selfish and narrow and imperfect wisdom of man. "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." The fate of Lot is a standing warning to all who are inclined to look only at the financial side in choosing a life vocation.

The above rules, if faithfully and universally put into practice, would put an end to all crookedness, strife, famines and financial panics in business.

"FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE"

There are doubtless some who disapprove of the line of thought herein presented, but we insist that every thought presented is founded upon Gospel truth, and enter a solemn protest against the almost universal practice of substituting Policy for Right in business circles. A conscientious regard for Christian principles in business circles would mean a revolution in busi-

ness methods. Instead of the mighty struggles for princely fortunes and personal glory, we would then have a generous effort to promote the happiness and welfare of all people. Selfishness would be absorbed in philanthropy, and the earth would yield her bounties to the good of all mankind. This earth will never witness an era of genuine peace and prosperity until by common consent of the business world Christ is made to reign in business.

STUDY OF THE BIBLE

The mind grows like that upon which it feeds. Novel reading makes people sentimental, superstitious, light-minded and frivolous. The reading of "blood and thunder literature" develops boys into outlaws and bandits. Lack of reading or intelligent conversation leaves the mind undeveloped, empty and ignorant, and unfits man for anything but vulgar talk, idle tales and neighborhood gossip. The reading of good, solid literature, among which the Bible stands first, develops boys and girls into good, solid men and women.

The influence over us of what we read is one of the reasons why we should make a thorough study of the Bible. It is the Book of all Books. It contains an accurate description of the way of life. It teaches the way to Christ, and through Him, to glory. It fills the mind with lofty aims and thrills the heart with hopes of heaven. It elevates the character, points out clearly our Christian duties and strengthens the workers in the cause of Christ. It lifts the children of God above the enjoyment of sin, and arms them against the power of temptation. Let

the mind feast upon Bible truth, and the character will assume Bible purity.

WHEN TO STUDY THE BIBLE

The study of the Bible should begin in early youth and continue as long as we can see to read. There is no such thing as "graduating" from the Bible. Every time we read it we gather new thoughts, and comprehend more clearly its truths. It should be studied in youth, that children may early learn to know the way of Life, and that the truths of the Bible may be a factor in developing their characters. It should be studied in middle life, while the mind is still active, and a vigorous body sustains the vigorous use of the mind. It should be studied in old age, that the judgment of riper years may be utilized in bringing forth from the immortal fountain gems of truth which could not be discovered by minds less matured. It should be studied continually all along the pathway of life, that our whole pathway may be lighted up by its luminous truths.

The Bible should be studied daily. Some people think they have no time to read; but the fact is, the busiest people are as a rule the ones who find most time to read. Lazy men never find time for anything but to kill God's precious time. It is the busy man who has most time to devote to useful employment. Did you ever

think how few people there are who do not waste enough time every day to read two or three chapters from the Bible? Idle talk, idle games, useless sleep, day-dreaming, standing to watch the crops or the stock grow, spending time on work altogether useless, doing work so slovenly that it must be done over again—these are a few among many ways of wasting time. Besides, if people are so very much engrossed in the affairs of this world that they take no time to read the Bible, this is the greatest reason why they should be alarmed at their spiritual condition; for there is a pressing need for the power of the Gospel to save them from the power of worldiness. To "search the scriptures daily" was no more noble for the Bereans than it is for us. Let us see that this duty is not neglected.

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

In my opinion, the best way to study the Bible is by topical method. The truth of God's word is vividly impressed upon the mind in this way, and the facts are collected and grouped ready for use. But we should not neglect a continuous reading of the Bible from beginning to end. It is surprising to find how much of the Bible is skipped when the topical method only is used. Let the Bible student take his Bible occasionally and begin with Genesis and continue his readings until Revelation is finished. Even if this is "the old way," it is a good one.

Another good way is to take single books and make a thorough study of them before any other part of the Bible is taken up. Sometimes, by taking single chapters and reading them over and over again, until every portion of it is vividly fixed upon the mind, the sacred truths of God's word are riveted upon our minds and made a part of our being.

A good way to give children a good knowledge of Bible truth is to gather them daily around the family altar and all take part in the reading.

Public study in Bible readings where a chapter is read and discussed, or Bible institutes, where a week or two is spent in special Bible study, afford excellent opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of the Word.

Good commentaries are excellent as *helps*, but should never be used as "props."

Any method which is undertaken with prayer and in the fear of God is a good method. What we want is a will to know and to do God's will, and a zeal to do as well as we know.

Never study the Bible when only half awake. If you can not possibly drive sleep away, go to bed and study after the sleep is gone.

FACTS ABOUT BIBLE-READING

The Bible contains 1189 chapters.

By reading a chapter each day, the Bible can

be read through three times in a little less than ten years.

By reading three chapters each day, it can be read through in a little over a year.

By puting in one-twentieth of our time, it can be read through in less than six months.

There are few chapters in the Bible which can not be read through in ten minutes.

There are few books in the Bible which can not be read in four or five hours.

NO EXCUSE FOR IGNORANCE

The amount of ignorance concerning the truth of God's word among many professed Christians is astonishing. There are men whose egotism leads them to believe that they belong to a select few who have about all the Christianity there is to be found in this world, who have never looked at half the pages of the Bible, much less studied and absorbed their contents; who couldn't name half the books of the Bible; who wouldn't know where to look for the ten commandments; who do not know which books belong to the New Testament; who are not sure whether the Sermon on the Mount was delivered by Christ or one of the prophets; who couldn't tell which is the oldest, Moses or Melchisedek; who can not give an intelligent scriptural reason for a single doctrine which they profess to believe; and yet they imagine themselves wondrously wise.

There was a time when many intelligent people had an excuse for not knowing much about the Bible; but that time is a thing of the past. When the Bible was locked up in monasteries and a heavy penalty attached for reading the few Bibles which eluded the public censorship, it was hard to get the word direct from the inspired Book; but times have changed. The Bible is being distributed everywhere and publishers and agents are anxious to distribute more. It is preached from the pulpit, taught in the Sunday school, and found in almost every home. If, in the face of these facts, we are still ignorant of God's word, whose fault is it?

Since God has placed us in a land where the Bible and conscience are free, and blessed us with minds to conceive and believe and receive His word; since He has repeatedly warned us to beware of false teachers, and invites to "search the scriptures," there is a responsibility resting upon us which we can not afford to ignore. We may not become authorities on Bible knowledge; but we can apply what talents God has given us, and spend many golden hours learning his will and refreshing our souls from the wonderful message which He sent to the children of men. Let us draw nigh to God in reading and meditation, and by His grace learn of His wisdom and heed His instruction.

LIBERAL GIVING

"How much shall I give?" is the question usually asked when this subject is mentioned.

"Give liberally," is the usual reply.

"What is liberal giving?" is the next question.

The best answer we ever heard to this question was given by our Savior: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

It was not alone in words that our Savior taught this way. Sometimes you hear people speak very nobly when telling how we should give, but their advice is all intended for other people. While they advise others to pull their purse-strings wide open, they themselves are content to confine their giving to a liberal flow of words. Not so our Savior. He taught liberal giving; but much more forcibly in life than in words.

In the first place, He gave up heaven. Then coming down into a sin-cursed world, He no sooner arose to a position of responsibility than the devil came and offered Him dominion over all the world. This He refused, but chose a station of humble poverty—so poor that while

foxes had holes and the birds in the air had nests, He Himself had not where to lay His head. Seeing that the whole world was sold under sin, He gave up His life as a ransom for His enemies. Where can you find a more perfect example of complete sacrifice than that?

"But," says some one, "If I knew, as Christ did, that I would be raised up from the dead and carried home to glory as He was, it wouldn't be hard for me to make great sacrifices." Christ had the same promise that we have—nothing more. He walked by faith, so must we. We are as sure for glory as He was if we are alike faithful. All we have to do is to trust and obey. God does the rest.

If Christ considered the salvation and evangelization of the world of sufficient importance to make His great sacrifices for us, we, who receive the benefit of the same, should show our gratitude by responding liberally to the support of the cause for which He gave His all. With a surrendered will, we should do what we can that His labors shall not be in vain. While there are many ways in which the cause of Christ should be supported, the means of support to which we now direct our attention is that which affects the pocket-book.

It is a fact worthy note that much of the money spent today, presumably in the service of the Lord, is really spent in an extravagant

service of the world. If the millions that are spent in erecting costly church edifices, maintaining fashionable preachers and choirs, and lavished upon a gorgeous display of affected Christian work, could be put to a more direct use in the work of the Lord, we would see different results. In other words, if there were fewer churches conducted as fashionable clubs, and more churches enter into a whole-hearted, soul-saving work, and apply their money where it would make a display in heaven rather than on earth, the devil wouldn't have so many easy victories. But a misuse of money by some people is no excuse for withholding from the Gospel a proper support. No surer evidence can be found of a "leanness of soul" than a failure to contribute to the work of the Lord as the "Lord hath prospered." "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

The Bible speaks in no uncertain tones on the question of giving. As a few among many references, we quote the following:

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase" (Prov. 3:9).

"He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he repay him again" (Prov. 19:17).

"Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10).

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Cor. 16:2).

"God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Cor. 9:7).

"Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8).

AMOUNT OF GIVING

Is there a limit to the amount we should give?

Yes. God sets the limit (Rom. 12:2). As to the amount of money or goods which should be donated to the cause, the Gospel standard is, "as the Lord hath prospered." When, prompted by love for the cause, we are led to give "freely," "cheerfully," and "as the Lord hath prospered," we have complied with all Gospel requirements on giving.

MOTIVES IN GIVING

God wants *motives* rather than *amounts* in contributions. The widow's mite was commended above all the other gifts, not because of its intrinsic value, but because it was a contribution prompted by the right kind of a mo-

tive. And really it was worth more than all the other gifts put together; for while its immediate value amounted to but little, it has touched the hearts of thousands of all ages since that time. God rewards sincerity in *giving*, as well as in all other lines of Christian service.

Speaking of *proper* motives in giving, it may not be out of place to name some *improper* motives. Following are a few of them:

1. Because others give.
2. To escape being considered miserly.
3. To show others how liberal we are.
4. To outdo somebody else.
5. To make a display of our bank account.
6. To cause other people to give freely.
7. To cause the church to overlook some of our crooked deeds.

TITHING

Much has been said in recent years with reference to tithing. The question is worthy of our consideration. I am not one of those who believe in going back to the Jewish dispensation, and claim this as a law still in force; but I do think that there is enough merit in the system to merit our attention for a little while.

Long before the law was given on Mt. Sinai, Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek. It is a system, therefore, which had existence even before the Mosaic law. In the New Testament, the foundation is somewhat different. There it is

"freely," "cheerfully," and "as the Lord hath prospered." But the idea of systematic giving is still maintained. The question now arises. Since tithing was the plan which God used when the government of His people was in His immediate charge, and since it is in accordance with the New Testament plan of giving "as the Lord hath prospered," why not adopt the plan today—not as a matter of law, but as a matter of wisdom? Those who advocate the plan give the following as some of the reasons why it should be adopted:

1. It is giving as the Lord prospers us.
2. It settles the question as to how much to give.
3. It saves many an anxious question as to where the money is to come from.
4. It would furnish all the money needed for carrying on the Lord's work.
5. It would distribute the burden of supporting the cause.
6. It is a direct sacrifice.
7. It is an effectual cure for the feeling of poverty so prevalent about collection time.
8. It necessitates an accurate account of receipts and expenditures, thereby infusing system into our business methods.
9. It was the plan which God used when the government of His people was in His immediate charge.

To bring this subject still further before our notice, we will answer a few questions.

Q. Does tithing call for one-tenth of our gross income, or of the net income only?

A. One-tenth of the gross income, minus the necessary expenses in securing this income. This will be illustrated by a few problems.

Q. Why count expenses?

A. We will illustrate by means of a problem. A farmer buys a car-load of cattle for $1500. His feed costs him $400. He sells the cattle for $2000. Figure for yourself whether his real income is $2000 or $100. But in these cases only the cash outlay made necessary in caring for and marketing the produce should be counted.

Q. What about living expenses?

A. Take them out of the other nine-tenths.

Q. Would this method stand in the way of giving more than the tenth?

A. No.

Q. Would not this be going back to the law?

A. No. It would be honoring God by taking the method which He Himself used.

Q. Should this rule be adopted by churches or by individuals?

A. By individuals. All contributions should be free-will.

Now a few more problems to illustrate the method. A teacher receives a salary of $240.

His necessary expenses while teaching are $90. What sum is due? Ans.: 10 per cent of (240-90) equals $15.

A merchant pays $1500 for goods, $150 for clerk hire, and $50 for rent. He sells his goods for $2400. What sum is due? Ans.: 10 per cent of (2400-1500-150-50) equals $70.

BLESSEDNESS OF LIBERAL GIVING

No one suffers for giving cheerfully and judiciously to Gospel work. Wherever the Bible mentions giving to the Lord, it is accompanied with promises of blessing. Even the giving of a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple is to be rewarded. God will not allow His children to suffer for maintaining His cause.

It requires no extraordinary intelligence to see the necessity of liberality in the support of the Gospel. There are churches to build, church institutions to support, the poor to be provided for, and other expenses necessary for the maintenance of the cause. "The poor ye have always with you." There are millions in the darkness of heathendom, starving for want of the Bread of Life. There are heathens in our own cities and communities who need the Gospel brought to them. To carry out the Lord's commandment to "teach all nations" means immense sacrifice. Who will help? There are many who are selfish enough to try to grasp all the blessings of earth

and heaven without a willingness to do anything in return. This makes the burden greater for those who are willing to bear their part of the load; but God blesses all His liberal supporters with experiences which makes them *feel* that "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

When Christ sent out His disciples He said, "Freely ye have received, freely give." After our earthly toils will have been ended; after we will have spent and have been spent in furthering the cause of Christ upon earth, and will stand before the bar of the great King to receive our eternal inheritance, it will be a blessed thing to hear the welcome plaudit, "Freely ye have given, freely receive."

THAT "UNRULY MEMBER"

James calls the tongue "the unruly member." Thinking people have ever since endorsed the term. It has been the cause of more family troubles, church quarrels, and disturbances generally than anything else known to man. Let any other part of the human machinery get out of order, and the tongue is sure to be heard. James says, "if any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." If this verse would receive the attention it deserves, it would cause many a man to reform his speech. The sins of the tongue are so numerous that our limited space forbids an attempt to enumerate all of them; but a few of the most common ones are mentioned with the hope that their real character may be recognized and the sin avoided.

IDLE WORDS

The Bible says, "For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." What are idle words? There is probably not one who has not a few

different kinds of them in mind. Let us name some of them.

1. *Idle talk*—that is, talking without saying anything. I remember one night, while riding on the train, there happened to be a group of young people present who seemed very glad that they were in each other's company. All night long we heard an incessant clatter of tongues. Toward morning an old man who had vainly tried to go to sleep, thus expressed himself: "I have heard that clatter all night, and there wasn't a grain of thought in all they said." It was one of the many instances where people talk without thought or subject. It were better for such people to rest their tongues and exercise their brains awhile. Then, if they wished to talk, they might have something to say.

2. *Trying to say smart things.* People sometimes make ridiculous statements without meaning anything by them, just to see how outlandish they can talk. I have my opinion of people whose judgment is so warped that they imagine they must act the fool to be smart. How wonderfully dull they must be while they are not trying "to be somebody."

3. *"By-words."* Why Christian people should ever get into the habit of using them is hard to explain. They are a mild form of swearing, their use is ungraceful, and they add neither force to what is being said nor credit to those

that use them. Our speech is not pure until the last one of them is dropped from our vocabulary.

4. *Profanity.* We call attention to this form of idle words, merely to emphasize the fact that no Christian uses profane language. Church-members may, but Christians never. The tongue of the Christian is too pure, too sacred, ever to blaspheme the name of God.

SO-CALLED "WHITE LIES"

It would be well to remember that the Bible makes no provisions for lies of any kind. A falsehood is a falsehod, whether small or great, and the sooner that all Christians awaken to the fact that there is no such thing as a white lie (they are all black) the better it will be for the world in general. Such things as parents telling their children about "Santa Claus," "a bear in the dark," or deceiving them in any other way, people telling unreasonable yarns to excite mirth, or ghost stories to create fear, etc., etc., should be scrupulously avoided, (1) because it is wrong to lie, (2) because strong impressions are often made which can never be eradicated.

These things may afford amusement to those who engage in deceptions; but the amusement is at least questionable, is positively unscriptural, and often leads to serious results. Many par-

ents have lost their influence over their children because their children detected them in telling what they considered "harmless" lies. When deception becomes visible, confidence is shaken. When confidence is shaken, influence is lost. When influence is lost, power is gone.

FILTHY COMMUNICATION

Among the most pitiable sights to behold is a motley crowd defiling their lips and besmirching their morals by indulging in foolish laughter, rehearsing vulgar yarns, telling immoral tales, cracking filthy jokes, and gloating over some unfortunate man's or woman's disgrace. Such conversation is more poisonous than strychnine and more filthy than the vilest litter to be found in the rankest heathen city. Natural poison can but kill the body; but this vile stuff often kills the soul! Never stay with a crowd which can not be turned away from such filthy conversation. It is not hard to guess the characters of men and women who indulge in such conversation; for "of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." No wonder the apostle warns his followers to put "filthy communication out of your mouth," and asserts that "evil communications corrupt good manners;" for those who are addicted to this kind of conversation are living witnesses to the truth of these assertions.

NEIGHBORHOOD GOSSIP

There are a few things plainly to be seen about those who love to talk about their neighbors' faults. (1) They delight in the downfall of others. (2) They are two-faced. (3) They never try to reform those whose characters they try to blacken. (4) They have a wonderful imagination. (5) They are never known to pray for their erring neighbors, except when they want to parade their own piety. (6) When they leave the neighborhood, everybody rejoices.

Never publish your neighbors faults, unless they are of such a nature that others need to be warned against them. The divine command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is a sure cure for all impertinent neighborhood gossip. Let a community get into the habit of parading one another's faults, and you will soon see a neighborhood where false reports are numerous, much bad blood is developed, and the power for good largely destroyed.

But if you are not to talk about your neighbors' faults, and strictly avoid all foolish or idle talk, what will you talk about?

Talk about your neighbors' good qualities. It is hardly likely that you possess all the virtue there is to be found in the neighborhood. If we know of nothing else to talk about except foolishness and neighbors' faults, it shows an amazing

lack of information. Can we not talk about Bible characters, about useful books which we have read, about Christian duty in home or church or society about means of awakening greater interest in spiritual matters, and about other subjects which come up in connection with domestic, business or religious life? Here are some topics for discussion. Have we exausted them? There are plenty of useful topics for conversation to keep us talking constantly for the rest of our lives, without having to stoop to the low level of vulgar talk or airing neighbors' scandals.

SCOLDING

is another use of the tongue which needs a passing notice. Nothing is more destructive to noble life than the constant snappish, snarling, crusty, caustic, vitriolic harange of the chronic scold. Whatever may be the cause of this perverted use of the tongue—disappointment in marriage, provoking environments, weakness of character, disordered liver, or love of the terrible —it is certain that matters are never bettered by scolding. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger."

It is necessary at times to give reproof; but it is not necessary to scold the reproof into the offender. It pays to talk kindly, even if you are talking to wife or husband or children. Many a child has had a naturally loving and lovable dis-

position soured by scolding parents. If parents want the lasting gratitude of their children, let them talk to them as though they were human beings. "Like begets like." Love is responsive; so is hatred. It is usually the scolding parents who must bear the reproach of having impudent children. Give reproof when it is needed; but give it in gentle tones.

THE TONGUE THE INDEX OF THE HEART

What are usually known as "sins of the tongue" are really sins of the heart. "Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." In our efforts to control the tongue, we should not forget that the tongue would behave itself if only the heart where in the right condition. When the heart is fixed upon God, the tongue gives utterance to praise. When the heart is filled with the goodness of God, the tongue gives evidence of the fact by speaking words of blessing. The tongue is the index of the heart; and when it moves in a way that it should not, the same should be considered evidence that there is something about the heart which needs looking after. Our whole question, therefore, resolves itself into this: Get the heart right with God, and the tongue ceases to be the unruly member.

HOLD YOUR TEMPER

Did you ever study the disposition of an angry man?

He has a particular displeasure in some person or animal, and of course this would afford him no pleasure if he did not manifest it in some way. So he lowers his eyebrows, grits his teeth, clinches his fists, his face gets red, his eyes fiery, and his countenance says, "Vengeance is sweet—but terrible." The only relief he gets is in inflicting some injury upon the object of his wrath. Beating stock, scolding wife or children, growling, pouting, crying like a baby, perpetrating some mean, underhand trick—these are some of the avenues through which his pent-up wrath finds a means of escape. The sinner, who is not in the habit of observing moral restrictions gives the most natural expression to this state of the mind by pouring out a volley of curses.

A display of high temper is a disgraceful scene, no matter whether the wrathful creature calls himself saint or sinner. No man was ever in a violent rage, except when his heart was full

of murder. Family or neighborhood feuds, brutal treatment of stock, outright murder, and many other grievous sins, are the natural fruits of uncontrolled temper.

THINGS NOT TO BE FOUND IN AN ENRAGED MAN

There are a few things which are always absent in a man under power of a violent fit of anger. He can not detect in himself the love of either God or man or beast. There is no disposition to be fair or reasonable. There is no disposition to pray for his enemies. In fact, his religion, if he ever professes any, is for the time being forgotten, and his passions have full sway. The nobler qualities of the man are for the time being overshadowed by the instincts of the brute.

WHY CONTROL THE TEMPER

Temper, when under proper control, adds to a man's usefulness, in that it spurs him on to more vigorous efforts, moves him to look with indignation upon sin, and gives him a zeal for righteousness which a temperless man can not have. Uncontrolled, it dethrones the reason, drives love from the heart, makes a man disagreeable to his associates and brutal to his stock, disqualifies him for the enjoyment of the nobler faculties of the mind, unfits him for the companionship of a true wife or for the government of a family, and is a serious damper on his usefulness, no matter where you put him.

WE CAN IF WE WILL

Some people contend that they can not control their temper. A better way of stating the facts in the case is that they *will* not control their temper. To them, "vengeance is too sweet" even to miss an opportunity to take vengeance upon the object of their wrath. That man is not living who can not, by the help of God, obtain mastery over this or any other sin. Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." No man whose heart is filled with the love of God, and who makes it a business to be kind to all men and all creatures needs to complain that he can not control his temper.

HOW GET RID OF A HIGH TEMPER

The desire for revenge lies at the root of a high temper. Here then is the place to begin. So long as we harbor a desire to "get even" with someone for real or fancied wrong, we may patch up, but we can not get rid of a quick and ugly temper. "Where vengeance is sweet," the soul is very bitter. This bitterness must be gotten rid of before we get very far in the way of conquering a high temper. We must rise to that standard where we desire the well-being of every soul, be they friends or enemies. It is human to pray that God might open the eyes of our enemies; it is God-like to wish them well

and pray that God may prosper them. Whenever we get offended at the course of others, our struggle should be, not with them but with ourselves.

The way to get rid of a desire for revenge is through the avenues of prayer and consecration. As evidence that our prayers are answered, we will find our hearts filled with love for our fellow-man, our prayers will ascend in behalf of our enemies and our disposition will be to return good for evil. With the desire for revenge taken away, our temper will be easily governed. When this is coupled with an infilling of God's love, the result will be an evenness of temper which gives us a mastery over self and a commanding influence over others. It is a well-known fact that they who govern themselves best, govern others most easily.

Don't say that you can not control your temper. That is a confession of a weakness which high-tempered people usually resent as an insult. It is also a confession that you have either not consecrated yourself, or that God has failed to do what He promised He would do. When you are minded to fly upon the object of your displeasure, fly to God in prayer. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil-speaking, be put away from you with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tend-

er-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Then will your life be like the sunshine of heaven and your influence yield an hundred fold in the service of God.

Whoever does a complete job in conquering self always succeeds in conquering the temper along with the other elements of his being.

SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT

The natural man seeks to exalt himself. Of a different nature are the children of God, who recognize that "before honor is humility." In the face of the fact that "whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted," many poor souls, like Esau, have sold their prospects of future glory for the temporary gratification of fleshly desires. Self-aggrandizement is a poor substitute for that loftier aggrandizement with which God beautifies the souls of His children.

EGOTISM

is one of the natural fruits of, and another name for the disposition to magnify the importance of self. People in whom this faculty is largely developed give evidence of their vanity in the following ways:

1. They love to talk about themselves.
2. They have a sublime confidence in every thing they say and do.
3. They are astonished when others fail to see and appreciate their admirable qualities.
4. If they are not consulted about everything they are sure to be heard from.

5. They estimate their worth far above the estimate which others put upon them. Heaven pities them and the world laughs at them.

"God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble."

EXTRAVAGANCE

Egotism usually leads to extravagance. People who wish to be considered among the "higher (?) circles" of society, make extravagant outlays for things designed to excite the wonder, the admiration and the envy of others. Others, not wishing to be outdone, bend every energy to keep up appearances equally imposing. The rich spend of their abundance to outshine the poor, while the poor sacrifice the necessaries of life, and often their integrity and honor, to keep up with the rich. As a result of this struggle, this age excels all past ages in presenting a brilliant display which dazzles the eye, depletes the pocket-book and impoverishes the soul. There seems to be a general acceptation of the invitation, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry: for to-morrow we die." To the eye of the world, this looks splendid; but let us look at results:

1. To keep up this gaudy display necessitates the expenditure of countless millions which might have been used in relieving the wants of the poor and in spreading the Gospel.

2. Thousands of people have been reduced

to poverty and disgrace as a result of their mad attempts to keep up appearances. "Pride goeth before destruction."

3. A dazzling display of worldly things intoxicates the soul of man and unfits him for the sober duties of life. If Solomon was led into idolatry under such circumstances, what may we expect of others less wise than Solomon?

4. The goddess of pleasure always reigns where feasting and levity and extravagance are the order of the day. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

5. Wealth, rather than character, being taken as the standard in gay society, the doors of society are thrown wide open to polished reprobates, whose baneful influence is everywhere felt. Where gilded vice is preferred before honest piety, beware of results.

6. The poor are turned away from the churches because they can not keep up appearances, and vice is encouraged because the development of the nobler qualities is neglected.

7. Worship is stripped of its spiritual power because heart religion is made secondary to worldly splendor.

It is not our purpose to lay down any law telling people what they shall or shall not do with their money; but we do wish to lift our feeble voice against the extravagant waste of

money which is lavished upon worse than useless purposes, and to call attention to the fact that we are simply stewards over God's heritage, using or abusing the means He has placed at our disposal. When you are tempted to build a house for which you have no particular need, or to purchase fine furniture which you could do without, or bedeck your body with costly clothing, or take a pleasure trip in which there is no profit, or purchase food and drink which injures the body more than it builds it up, or to make any other needless expenses, stop and think whether this is the best use which could be made of the money Think of the widows and orphans who are shivering for want of shelter, food and clothing. Think of the aged fathers and mothers whose tottering steps and quivering limbs and ragged clothes appeal to the sympathy of generous people. Think of the sick who are suffering for want of proper attention. Think of wives and children who are spending lives of misery and starvation because of the improvidence of drunken husbands and fathers. Think of the millions in the darkness of heathendom who are perishing for want of the Bread of Life. Think of these varied conditions of human life and human want, and then think whether you have any money to lavish needlessly upon yourself.

Here is a rule which if intelligently followed

will help us in answering the question as to what use to make of our money. Aim to place every dollar under our control where it is actually needed, and where it will be continually talking for the Lord.

Some people excuse themselves for making useless expenditures on the ground that it is their money, and that it is nobody else's business what they do with it. It may be that it is no other man's business, but we are sure that it is the *Lord's* business. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." We have no money, save what the Lord chooses to lend us. Every dollar we get into our possession increases our responsibility to that extent. Every dollar we misappropriate adds that much to our guilt of wasting our Master's goods. Knowing that money can serve but a temporary purpose, let us make such use of the means entrusted to our care, that when we fail, they may receive us "into everlasting habitations."

PERSONAL ADORNMENT

There is this difference between a spiritually-minded and a carnally-minded person: The first seeks to adorn "the hidden man of the heart;" the second, the "fleshly tenement of clay." There are few things which have been more severely denounced than fashion. It has been recognized to the extent that dress reform con-

ventions have been held to see what could be done. It has been proclaimed against from the pulpit and through the press of almost all denominations. Even the slaves of fashion who worship constantly at the shrine of fashion-plates, have cried out against it and denounced it as a tyrant. Still it reigns with unwavering hand, and thousands who profess to be in the service of the God of heaven are voluntary slaves to the goddess of fashion.

Do you ask why? Too much carnality in the affections. Too much admiration for a graceful physical person and carriage, and not enough admiration for Christian graces. Too much love for the world, and not enough love for God. The natural man is held at a premium, and the spiritual man held at a discount. As long as these conditions exist, we may expect nothing else than that people will continue to follow the worldly fashions, no matter how outlandish they may be. Let the minds and affections of people be set upon heavenly things, and the spiritual man be preferred before the natural, and we shall see how careful they will be that their adorning be not "that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but **** the hidden man of the heart."

AMBITION

is another highway of sin, upon which many

a soul has been wrecked. When we speak of ambition, we do not mean that noble desire to be of use to God and man, and a willingness to serve as God may direct, but rather that selfish desire for place and power which causes man to value righteousness less than possessions and popularity.

It is right that we should seek to cultivate the talents which God has given us and invest these talents where they will bring the greatest income to the Giver of the same. Paul says, "Covet earnestly the best gifts." It is important that we improve every opportunity to make ourselves as useful to our heavenly Maker as it is possible for us to be. I like to see our young people go forth with a vim, learning everything useful that they can, and hunting those places where under God they may be of the highest possible service to Him.

But to seek a field of usefulness for the good we may do is one thing, and to seek a coveted position of place or power for the glory it brings in this life is quite another thing. An ambition to rise to positions of honor is a form of selfishness, and usually leads to a struggle for place in opposition to the interests of others. The military hero rides to glory over a field of blood, often over the dead bodies of his fellow-men. The politician jostles his competitors aside, and wins his office. The business man enhances his own

interests at the expense of others, and wins his fortune. This seems fine for the ambitious man who wins the race, but what about the rest? What about the scriptures, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," "In honor preferring one another," etc.? Granting that fairness was used in every particular (which is not often the case where ambition rules) it is still a question whether it was best for the world that these men succeeded.

Besides, more ambitious men have failed than succeeded in their selfish struggle for earthly glory. How many men have wrecked their own lives, and the lives of others, because of ambition? Where one succeeds, a dozen fail.

Young man, don't go to the trouble of picturing for yourself air-castles of your future work and greatness in this life. Don't set your affections on any one coveted position in life. I believe that God despises place-hunters about as much as any other class of people. Be willing to let God pick your place for you. If you will attend to simple duty, God will take care of your greatness. Apply yourself vigorously to the development of the faculties which God has given you. Be willing to work wherever there is an opening, let that opening be along the line of manual labor, in the educational field, in the misson field, or wherever it may be. "I'll go where you want me to go," should not be sung, "I'll go where I want you

to want me to go." It means more than a desire to fill a certain place. It means that if it is the Lord's will I'll work a life-time on a thankless job without one cent of pay. Don't be afraid that God will not use you in the place where you will be of the greatest possible use to Him. There is no question but that, by taking the broader view of life and working for God and humanity rather than nursing our own personal ambition, our life will be more satisfactory to ourselves, more useful to our fellowmen, and more glorious in the sight of God, than by taking any other course.

COVETOUSNESS AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

are two more ways in which many people violate the laws of God in the attempt to shed luster on themselves; but since they are mentioned in other places, we simply name them here to classify them where they belong, and to hold them up as sins to be hated and avoided. A fat purse invariably dries up the soul, while pride in our supposed goodness proves the absence of that true Christian piety which keeps us humble before God and man, and enriches the soul with spiritual grace and power.

SELF-DENIAL

Having offered a few thoughts on the folly of self-aggrandizement, let us turn our attention to the beauty of self-denial. As

A BIBLE DOCTRINE

it is forcibly presented by our Savior when He says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me;" and again, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." We have here the emphatic declaration that he who would be a follower of Jesus Christ must not only believe in self-denial, but practice it. In line with this teaching is this admonition from Paul: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

We get further insight into the principle of self-denial from Luke 9:24; "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it." The interpretation of this verse seems to be this: There lives within this mortal frame of mine, one of two persons—"the first Adam" or the "second Adam, "Christ which liveth in me." Should I

cling to the first Adam (self), death is certain. Should I allow self to be crucified and let Christ reign within, my soul will live forever. Hence it follows that if I save my life (the first Adam) I am lost; but if I lose this life, I shall find a life which never dies.

SELF- DENIAL EXEMPLIFIED

A few illustrations may help us to get this principle of self-denial more vividly fixed in our minds. God has planted something in our souls which prompts us to want to see right prevail, and aside from self we always want to see the right things done; but when self interest intervenes, the temptation is to set aside the right and substitute the wrong. They who do right in spite of self interest or inclination practice self-denial. To illustrate:

I know that it is right to tell the truth, and I don't want to do anything else. But I am about to sell something, and if I tell the whole truth, I will spoil the sale. Self-interest says, "Keep still." My conviction of right says, "Tell the whole truth." I say no to self, and hold to the right.

I abhor drunkenness, and believe it is wrong. But somehow "soft drinks" taste good, and the appetite calls for them. My conviction of right says, "If you touch these drinks, they will create an appetite for the stronger intoxicants, and

make a drunkard out of you." Self says, "Don't be so particular. It tastes good, drink it." I say no to self, and hold to the right.

I believe we should help our fellow men whenever they need our help. I see my poor neighbors all about me, needing help; but self says, "Don't rob yourself on their account. They had the same chance to make money that you did." But duty appeals to me more strongly than self interest, and I say no to self to help my neighbor.

Thus we might go on giving one illustration after another, showing how that self comes up to be reckoned with every time a Christian duty is before us. They who hold to the right at all times and follow Christian duty as they see it, have a continual reminder that self is on the cross and would like to get off. They who close their eyes to this fact and make themselves believe that self is so completely destroyed that it needs no longer to be reckoned with, are the most liable to make woeful blunders in their Christian experiences.

BEARING THE CROSS

The carnal man worships self more than God; therefore for him to bear the cross means an intolerable burden. The Christian's cross upon the back of an unconverted man is much heavier than it is upon the shoulders of one who acknowledges Christ as his burden-bearer. The

secret of easy cross-bearing is entire submission to God. The closer our connection with sin, the harder it is to resist temptation. While the Israelites were yearning for the "fleshpots of Egypt," they considered their burden unbearable, and murmured against God and against Moses; but while they had their whole thought fixed upon the land of promise, they praised God that they had the privilege of moving forward at His command. The more complete your separation from the world, the less hold the world has upon you, and the easier it is to bear the cross. Would you enjoy your religion? Have no connection with the world of sin. Our Savior's invitation, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ....my yoke is easy and my burden is light," was fully accepted by Paul when he said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." God grant us grace that the apostle's testimony may be made our own.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN

No real gain has ever been made without a sacrifice. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," is the expression of a truth which may be applied to everything with which man is connected. If we desire anything substantial,

we must make a sacrifice to get it. The greater the thing desired, the greater the sacrifice needed to attain it.

The farmer who tills his soil best, usually reaps the best crops. The merchant who applies himself closely to his business is usually successful. The student who denies himself the pleasures of society, and applies himself to his books while others revel in luxury, generally stands at the head of his class. It is so in all we undertake. Sacrifice produces results, whether this sacrifice consists in muscle, money, time, ease, or pleasure.

The greatest achievements of this world have been the result of immense human sacrifice. Columbus sacrificed wealth, friends, and the respect of mankind before he discovered America. The sewing machine is the product of years of study, hardship and poverty on the part of men like Elias Howe. Cyrus Field spent millions of dollars and crossed the Atlatic Ocean fifty times before the Atlantic cable was a success. Our Pilgrim fathers went through a long siege of poverty, persecution and self-denial before the foundations of our country were securely laid. These are a few among many thousands of instances which might be given to show that success in any line can be achieved only at the expense of sacrifice.

What is true in natural things is also true in

spiritual matters. No one has ever drifted into glory by quietly folding his arms and floating with the tide. If that were the way to heaven the story of the cross would never have been written. "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion!"

The redemption of man was of such momentous importance that only the blood of Jesus could accomplish it. The continual fasting and prayer for ten days on the part of the disciples preceded the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Ghost and the subsequent conversion of thousands of souls. Paul sacrificed a promising earthly career, and millions of Gentiles were made to rejoice because of this and other sacrifices. The cross of Christ was taken up and borne by Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Menno Simon, and dozens of other soldiers of the cross, and the world witnessed a great emancipation from the tyranny of Rome. Go where you will, and you will find that the true, noble, useful, prosperous, happy Christians are the cross-bearing Christians. Would you see a poverty-stricken people, spiritually? Go to places where the barriers against worldliness have all been taken down, and where people have never learned to deny themselves of the riches and pleasures and vanities of this world. God has ordained that whoever would wear the crown must reach it by way of the cross.

THE POWER OF SELF-DENIAL

It may be asked, Why does self-denial perform such an important part in the work of the Lord? We answer, it empties the heart of self. This means getting rid of sin, and all hindrances to spiritual growth. These hindrances removed, God can have full possession of our hearts, and make of us what He will. This means that, being lifted above the sins of the world, we may "grow in grace and a knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"; that we realize more and more that religion is not some vague, indefinite something which every one should have when he comes to try the realities of another world; but that it is a living reality, a comfort to its fortunate possessors even in this life, a means of enlightenment to the world, and a shield against the miseries of sin. But our wisdom in denying self will become fully apparent when, in rapturous delight, we shall awaken upon the other shore. Then shall we realize "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" that our crosses on earth "worked for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

THE SABBATH

Man needs a day of rest. In the first place he needs it physically, and then it is also to his advantage spiritually to have a time when his mind is taken away from earthly things, and his attention fixed upon the God of his salvation. For these, and probably for other reasons, God has seen fit to institute the Sabbath. As to the purpose for which the Sabbath was instituted and sanctified, and our duty concerning it, let God speak:

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work."

Then why not keep the seventh day for the Sabbath?

We do. Whenever we keep one day out of seven, we keep the seventh day. In this, we follow the order of God in the creation, who gave man the Sabbath the first day after he was created, this being previous to the six days of labor following. The Sabbath should not only

be a day of rest, but also a day of preparation. We do not keep the same day of the week which the Jews did under the old dispensation, because Christ, who "is Lord even of the Sabbath day," changed the day. Among the changes which came with the change in dispensations was the change from the Jewish to the Christian Sabbath. Christ arose on the first day of the week, and His disciples kept it as a holiday. After this they met frequently on the first or eighth day, and our Savior signified His approval by meeting with them on several occasions. The worship on the first day of the week was sanctified at Pentecost. There is nothing in the New Testament which would indicate that Saturday is preferable to Sunday as the Sabbath. Upon the resurrection of Christ, His followers began to keep Sunday as the Sabbath, and have kept it up ever since. With the Levitical law, which specified Saturday as the Sabbath, abolished, and nothing in the New Testament in favor of Saturday or against Sunday as the Sabbath, and with the example of Christ and the apostles and the early Christians in favor of the first day of the week, what right has any one to say that we must turn down all this testimony and upset the existing order of affairs, and go back to the Levitical law as our Gospel?

"REMEMBER THE SABBATH"

is the way the fourth commandment begins.

The great error of Israel was that the people forgot their God and plunged into idolatry. Forgetting God in time brings terrible consequences in eternity (Psa. 9:17). Let us not make the same mistake of forgetting either God or His word. While through the example and implied teaching of Christ and His disciples the day of worship has been changed, the institution of the Sabbath is as old as the creation itself. Among the things to be remembered is the fact that God made for man a Sabbath.

KEEP IT HOLY

Why should we remember the Sabbath? "To keep it holy." That is what the Sabbath is for. While remembering "the Sabbath to keep it holy," let us notice some of the unholy uses sometimes made of it:

1. *A perverted meaning of the word "rest."* Some would have the word "rest" include abstinence from active Christian work as well as physical work. If this view is right, our Savior was wrong; for the Sabbath was usually among His busiest days.

Putting into practice this perverted meaning of the word "rest" causes people to sleep late on Sunday morning, sleep during church services, or stay at home to "rest" their weary bodies. Satan gains a point every time people "rest" from their spiritual duties.

We always slight the work which we count of least importance. They who rob the Lord of His time by so completely exhausting their strength that they can not give Him vigorous service on Sunday, ought to get alarmed at their condition. As we said, Sunday is a day of preparation as well as a day of rest. They who spend this day in a godless manner are not liable to conduct their business in a godly way during the following week.

2. *Visiting* on Sunday is another hindrance to Christian work. I am not among those who believe in adding another commandment, "Thou shalt not visit on Sunday," but I do favor applying the scriptural admonition, "Do all to the glory of God," to visiting as well as to anything else we may do. It depends altogether what the *motive* is as to whether visiting on Sunday is right or wrong. One thing is certain; when people are filled with a love for the cause, they will not stay away from church to make a social visit. Nor will they collect in crowds on Sunday afternoons for the purpose of "having a good time." God expects better things of His people. Let your whole Sunday program be governed by I Cor. 10:31.

3. *Sunday excursions* have done much to draw the minds of people away from God. There is an air of levity about such crowds which is not conducive to spiritual growth. It is an

amazing sight to see people who are professedly in the service of God running away from their post of duty in hot pursuit of the goddess of pleasure. I question the conversion of any one who patronizes Sunday excursions, especially after the evils arising from such things has been pointed out to them, no matter what the professed object of the excursion may be.

Speaking of pleasure trips, bicycle rides and buggy rides must not be overlooked. True, it is as lawful to travel in this as in any other way; but no way of travel on Sunday is lawful when pleasure is the only object sought—the Lord's day is intended for more serious things.

4. *Improper conversation* often interferes with serious work. I have known professing Christians whose delight was to spend their Sundays in talking about growing crops, financial prospects, neighborhood scandals, politics, foolishness—anything but spiritual matters. "Brethren, these things ought not so to be." "Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If on the Lord's day our hearts are full of the affairs of this life, it shows our affections to be in the wrong place. With our hearts and minds and tongues fixed upon this world, what is left for the service and worship of God? On the Lord's day, especially, we need to "be about our Father's business."

5. *Unnecessary work* on Sunday mornings,

such as chopping wood, salting cattle, putting away machinery, washing or greasing buggies, fixing up fences, posting up bank accounts, hauling milk, shaving, getting ready for the next day's work, walking around over the place to watch the crops and the stock grow, and every other thing which could be done on Saturdays or Mondays, should be scrupulously avoided on the Lord's day. Some of these "oxen" occasionally get into the pits on Sunday, and when they do, they ought to be helped out; but if they make a business of getting in on Sunday, the pit should either be filled up or the "oxen" slain. The church is suffering to day because there are too many ox-lifters in it.

6. *Business which can not be conducted without violating the Sabbath* should be avoided by Christian people. God never created conditions which compelled His people to violate His laws. If the world created the necessity for carrying on certain lines of business on Sunday, let the world take care of this business. There is an inconsistency about Sabbath-breaking church-members which is hard to explain. They contend that it is necessary that the work in which they are engaged should be conducted on Sunday, and that therefore they are doing God's service in performing the labor; yet none of them would continue their business a single Sunday without pay. Money is a powerful factor

in manufacturing arguments on moral questions.

"But my business would be ruined if I did not attend to it on Sunday."

Then quit your business. Better have your business ruined than to have your business ruin you. "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." When a man has a righteous business, it is not likely that it will suffer because he insists on conducting it upon Gospel principles. God rewards faithfulness to His word in business as well as in other things. But even if you couldn't make your business pay without violating God's word, you should consider a clear conscience worth more than a thriving business. When a conscientious man finds that his business no longer pays, he should consider that as evidence that God wants him to do something else.

REST FROM YOUR WORK

"Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work." In other words: "You have had six days in which to gather the necessaries of life. That was the time to conduct all your business affairs. Now rest from your labors. Lay aside your business cares. Center your thoughts upon God, and refresh your souls from the Fountain of living waters."

There is no doubt about the wisdom of this commandment. The mind needs rest; so does the body. You have had six days of toil, and as a result your body is fatigued, and your mind loaded down with earthly cares. Now give yourselves time to build up. This plan worked well for the Jews. It works well today. I knew a man whose wealth was above the average. He was not a millionaire, but he had as much money as an honest man usually gets. When you saw that man on Sunday, and observed his conversation and interest in spiritual affairs, you couldn't detect that financial matters ever concerned him much. His mind having been refreshed by being unloaded of the cares of life for a time, and his soul being refreshed with spiritual draughts from the Fountain of truth, he was ready for the vigorous prosecution of his business affairs on Monday morning. There are hundreds of men like him. Would to God that such men could be numbered by the thousand. As a rule, it is a positive financial advantage scrupulously to observe the Sabbath.

But it is to our spiritual upbuilding that we must look for the great advantage in keeping the Sabbath day holy. The Spirit of God can not work in a heart which is filled with worldiness, such as pride and pleasure and money and bank notes and merchandise and land and horses and hogs and cattle and corn and other things

too numerous to mention. These things must get out of the heart before the spiritual man can grow much. The greater the freedom from the cares and pleasures of this life, the more glorious the Sabbath. We should therefore

MAKE IT A RULE

to devote the entire Sabbath exclusively to the direct service of God; that from midnight Saturday until midnight Sunday we will drop our six-day business entirely; that during this time we will do no manual labor save that which is necessary in the way of unavoidable choring and in doing deeds of mercy; that we drop any business in which we can not live up to this rule, and that we will have no part in any business which deprives any one from church privileges. This looks like total abstinence, but it is straight Gospel, and God will bless us for it. God honors those who delight to honor His word.

PRAYER

Every Christian prays. Not merely because people expect it of him, nor merely because it is a duty; but because there is a bond between him and his Creator which makes it as natural for him to go to God in prayer as it is for a child to look to his earthly parents for sustenance and protection.

Neglect the privilege and duty of prayer, and you sever the connecting link which binds you to your God. God's answer to prayer constitutes the sustenance of our spiritual bodies. The more sincere and fervent our prayers, the richer our supply of spiritual food. The toils and turmoils of life should never be permitted to interfere with the blessed privilege of prayer.

"PRAY WITHOUT CEASING"

How often should Christians pray?

As often as the Spirit prompts them to praise the Lord or to call upon Him for help. The most direct Bible answer to this question is the admonition to "pray without ceasing." We do not understand by this that we should at all times be in the attitude and act of direct worship, but that there should be no interruption in our

regular devotions. We should have our regular times of prayer, and that should be at least several times daily. We should know and feel that God is "a very present help in time of need," and should never fail when in need to call upon Him. Our hearts should be filled with gratitude toward our great Friend and Protector, and this should find expression in frequent praise and adoration. This is praying "without ceasing."

Unceasing prayer may be illustrated in this way: A farmer sets out an orchard, which to be profitable needs his careful and constant attention. The soil must be cultivated, the trees pruned and examined a number of times each year that everything may be kept in proper order. It is not necessary for him to be among his trees all the time; yet they need his constant care, and he must be there often enough to protect them from harm. To cease caring for them and staying away from them one year might mean the ruin of his orchard.

It is so with unceasing prayer. It is not necessary that we are on our knees continually, but our prayers must be frequent enough to keep us shielded from the darts of the enemy, nor must we at any time discontinue them. It is during times when we are negligent about our prayers that the enemy comes to sow his seeds of wickedness. "While men slept," the enemy sowed his tares. In the morning and in the evening, in

prosperity and in adversity, at home and abroad, in season and out of season, may there ascend to a throne of grace a stream of unceasing prayer and praise and thanksgiving for the boundless love, bountiful provisions and unceasing care of an all-wise Creator.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

Does God answer prayer? Certainly. He says so, and I believe Him. Not only has He promised to answer prayer, but He has left us enough instances on record to convince any man that He has the power and the will to make His word good. Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Hannah, Elijah, the apostles, Cornelius, and many others have left their testimonials upon the pages of the sacred record that God answers prayer. Thousands of holy men and women of every age since the advent of our Savior have had the testimony written upon their hearts by actual experience that God answers prayer. But God does not answer everything which is called prayer, nor does He answer all prayer in the way the petitioner desires it answered. If our Savior saw fit to insert "Thy will be done" into His prayers, let us not feel important enough to leave out this feature in our petitions. If we pray "according to His will," and carry out our part of the covenant, God will carry out His part.

FAMILY WORSHIP

We should be prayerful, not only as individuals, but as families. As families, we should have some formal way of expressing our thanks to God for the blessings which He bestows upon us as families. There should be an altar of the Lord in the heart of every individual, of every family, of every congregation. The custom of giving thanks at the table is a commendable one. It is a visible manifestation of gratitude for a visible supply of natural blessings.

But the blessings which come to families are not all manifest at the table. The privileges of home, the enjoyment of peace and comfort, deliverance from sickness, "showers of blessing" to refresh the growing crops and gladden the hearts of the owners, "showers of blessing" which result in the conversion of members of the household and mark a new era in the spiritual prosperity of the home, and many other blessings which God alone can bestow, should find a fervent response at the family altar. One reason why there is so much need of spiritual life in so many Christian families is because there is no visible sign that God has a place in their homes.

Every Christian family should have a regular time for family worship. The cares of life should never be permitted to interfere with this

sacred duty and privilege. On the other hand, the more pressing the cares, the greater the necessity for divine guidance. "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and *all these things* shall be added unto you." It is here, when father and mother and children are assembled for solemn worship, that impressions are made upon the hearts of the children which will have much to do in bringing them to paths of righteousness and ultimate glory. God speed the day when there will be such an awakening on this important Christian duty that not one Christian family can be found where there is no family altar.

PRAYER IN THE CHURCH

is a universal custom the importance of which can not be over-estimated. We should, however, guard against the error of the scribes and Pharisees, who loved to pray that they might be seen and heard of men. Is it not a fact that many public prayers consist of carefully prepared declarations and high-sounding oratorical efforts or expressions and "vain repetitions" designed to appeal to the ear of man? The fact that God should be appealed to, to open His treasury of divine riches and pour out His blessings upon the congregation, is to some extent lost sight of in the all-absorbing conviction that the prayer must be "edifying." Would to God

that men everywhere might awaken to the fact that even public prayer is intended for the ear of God rather than the ear of man. No one whose heart is not filled with the spirit of prayer should ever be called upon to lead in public prayer. No one who does not engage in frequent private prayer should ever assume to lead public prayers. When the hearts of the praying portion of the congregation are fixed upon God, and the voice of one gives expression to the desires of the congregation, no matter whether the voice is eloquent or otherwise, a glorious response is the result. Devotion, not rhetoric, is the eloquence which reaches heaven.

These references to public payer have been made with a two-fold object in view: (1) I want to encourage those who are more sincere than eloquent; (2) I want to warn those who are more boisterous than sincere—(1) I want to encourage those who send their appeals direct to the ear of God; (2) I want to warn those who go through the form of prayer to appeal to the ear of men.

If there is a time when the help of God is especially needed, and when there is need for repeated prayer, it is during public services. The minister is to be sustained, and the hearts of the hearers prepared for the proper reception of the word. The word of God is to be presented in purity, in simplicity and Spirit power.

Saints are to be edified and sinners brought to a realization of their condition. This is a work which God alone can do, and which God *will* do in answer to earnest prayer. In time of public prayer, every Christian should fervently and silently join in with the leader. When the leader in prayer gives voice to the united prayers of the congregation, the petitions carry with them a "power which moves the hand which rules the world."

There are times when the whole congregation should assemble for special prayer. I doubt the wisdom of the congregation holding regular prayer-meetings when the congregation is expected simply to pray for whatever happens to come up during the week; for I have never known such meetings to be continued very long without becoming spiritless and formal. But I do favor special prayer services for special things which demand the united prayers of the whole church. Bitter church quarrels, stolid indifference on the part of sinners and sometimes of members, great opposition on the part of other denominations or the outside world, a general drift towards worldliness, an "Achan" in the camp, and other very great evils, sometimes confront us. What is to be done? Let the same God who has delivered His people from many a seemingly hopeless struggle, be relied upon to do the same thing again. Let the pray-

ing portion of the congregation assemble before God, and wrestle with Him in prayer. No earthly foe can stand before the united prayers of a devout church. God has answered the prayers of His people many times before this, and He will do this as often and as long as there is a true church to pray to Him in the spirit of entire submission and trust.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF PRAYER

There is no time more sacred than the blessed hour of prayer. When drawn away from the trials and temptations of earth; when removed from the evil associations of this world, and thrown into the pure association of a loving Father; when thrilled with the many glorious promises which we may claim as our own; when lifted into the hallowed presence of our heavenly Father, our souls are enriched in sweet communion with Him, and our hearts instinctively throb as that of Peter when he said, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." Blessed Father! No tongue can describe the blessed privileges which Thou wouldst have Thy children enjoy, but of which they are often robbed by the sinful allurements of this world!

Prayer is a duty; but it is much more a privilege. The Bible enjoins it upon us, that we may rise to our Christian privileges. Sainted fathers and mothers have enjoined it upon us, because

they learned by experience that it is strengthening. The Christian world prays, knowing that prayer brings answer and draws us nearer to God. Well may the poet sing:

"Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known;
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief;
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

"Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

"Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
May I thy consolation share,
Till from Mt. Pisgah's lofty height,
I view my home and take my flight;
This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise
To seize the everlasting prize;
And shout, while passing through the air,
Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!"

OUR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Thus far we have addressed ourselves to all classes of church-members, both old and young. This chapter is intended especially for beginners in the service. It is always a source of great pleasure to me to attempt to encourage young believers. Especially is this the case when they have enlisted heart and soul in the service, and are anxious to do what they can to advance the kingdom of Christ upon earth. To all of you who have in your youth given your hearts to the Lord, we commend these words from Paul, a friend to young people:

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

"LET NO MAN DESPISE THY YOUTH"

Because you are yet young is no reason why any one should look upon you with contempt. Some of the most important events of the world's history were due to young people. Christ was a young man when His earthly labors were completed. Paul, Timothy, Titus, and a number of others of the noblest characters mentioned in the

Bible did some of their most effective work while they were yet young men. Philip's four daughters showed themselves the worthy daughters of a pious father. These illustrations might be extended to any length. I am glad that we have so many young people who have enlisted in the service of our Master. Would to God that we had many more. Through your instrumentality, I hope to see the kingdom of God extended upon earth, and many golden sheaves gathered for the Master's harvest. Only remember the source of all your blessings, and use your opportunities in a way becoming to young soldiers of the cross. It was not Timothy's youth for which Paul was concerned, but rather that he might use the blessings of youth to the good of the cause. Therefore I would say to you as did Paul to Timothy,

"BE THOU AN EXAMPLE"

not merely to the outside world, but "of the believers." Show yourselves worthy the honor which you think young people should have. Like Philip's daughters, may you be a light in the home, an example in society, and a power in the church. Let your lives be such that whatever else the world may have to say of you, they must recognize you as soldiers of the cross living lives worthy the name. In what ways should you be examples? Let Paul answer:

"IN WORD"

Let your word be such that it may be relied upon at all times and under all circumstances. What you say should be trusted by all who know you, because they know that you can be relied upon to tell the exact truth at all times. You should cultivate pure speech. What we mean by pure speech is language free from falsehoods, false words, foolish or vulgar talking, or anything which defiles the speech. Absolutely reliable, absolutely pure, is the ideal sought for in cultivating speech. To rise to this accomplishment takes years of cultivation, especially if your language has ever been tainted with any of the impure habits mentioned above; but by the grace of God you may attain it, and after you have it in your possession you have a jewel more precious than rubies.

"IN CONVERSATION"

This includes conversation, business transactions, and every way in which we come in contact with our fellow-man. In a former chapter we have expresssed ourselves as to some of the Christian's duties in business relations. This is one of the ways in which we are exhorted to be examples. In youth is the time to cultivate habits of honesty, fairness and righteousness in business methods. It is also the time to decide that we will never engage in any kind of busi-

ness in which we can not live in all good conscience before God and man. Honesty is a jewel which will not only bring you happiness and contentment, but will also make of you a noble instrument in the hands of God for the uplifting of your fellow-men. Your influence in the world will depend largely upon how you heed this part of the apostle's precept.

"IN CHARITY"

This is the test of true greatness. Read the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians for an exposition of this important Christian grace. Look to God as the best example and highest type of real love. If this love is the ruling factor in your life, it has driven out all selfishness from your heart, has made you the friend of the neglected and the needy, and filled your soul with the sunshine of heaven. "Be thou an example." Show by your life that your soul is enriched with this heaven-born grace, and many are they who are ready to rise up and call you blessed.

"IN SPIRIT"

The same spirit which prompted our Savior to leave the throne of heaven and die for the sins of men, which moved the apostles to go forth in the name of Jesus to make disciples of all nations, which led our forefathers to undergo centuries of persecution rather than surrender the

unclouded hope of the Gospel, which is the moving spirit in the performance of every noble deed, should be sought for and possessed and manifested by you in all you do—in all things "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

"Try the spirits, whether they be of God." It is they who manifest the right kind of a spirit in the service of God and man who exert a godly influence wherever they go. No grander sight exists on earth than a body of noble-hearted young people who are filled with a spirit of love and devotion and humility and reverence and loyalty to God and the church.

"IN FAITH"

Some people imagine that only aged people can be solid in the faith. This is a mistake. Young Timothy was a stronghold in faith and doctrine. Young Apollos saw no reason why his eloquence should prevent him learning from humble Aquilla and Priscilla. By adopting as your motto, "The Bible says so," you are not only on a solid foundation, but as you grow in years you will become more and more established in the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the greatest needs of the present century is young men and young women who are free from worldliness, thoroughly consecrated to the cause of Christ, and solidly indoctrinated in the Christian faith.

"IN PURITY"

This is the climax in the apostle's teaching. Purity in heart, purity in aspirations, purity in life; pure thought, pure speech, holy living—such is the ideal to be held before all people, young and old. A faith unalloyed with doubt, a mind untainted through harboring impure thoughts, eyes kept away as much as possible from impure sights and impure literature, lips and tongue undefiled by the use of vulgar, vile, filthy or profane language, hands unstained by sinful actions, and feet trained to walk in the footsteps of Jesus—such is a description of a life of pure gold, a prize earnestly to be sought and valued above all earthly treasures.

YOUNG PEOPLE THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH

It is to our young people that we must look as our future church. One by one our older pillars are taking their departure. Soon we who are now in middle life must follow. It will only be a few years until the full burden of responsibility will rest upon the shoulders of what we now call our young people. You are now in the period of preparation. See that you make the best use of your opportunities, learn all you can from those who have spent many years in the school of experience, learn your Bibles well, and meditate upon the most effective ways of working for Jesus. Keep yourselves pure by refus-

ing to be contaminated with sin, and by accepting the continual washing in the blood of the Lamb, and gather strength by training your talents for God. Shut your eyes against the temptation of substituting worldliness for godliness, and cling closely to the faith made precious by the blood of Jesus, and later by the blood of millions of His followers. This done, as each added responsibility falls to your lot, it will fall upon worthy shoulders. Whoever follows the advice of Paul as expressed in I Tim. 4:12, will some day enjoy experiences like his expressed in II Tim. 4:7, 8. You who are earnestly striving to fit yourselves for faithful, efficient service, remember that your course is watched with approval by those who are older, who look upon you as the hope of the church.

EVERY CHRISTIAN A WORKER

No man has ever made an acceptable servant without rendering faithful service. This rule applies to the Christian service as well as any other kind of service. The very fact that one is not working for God proves that he is not His servant.

To accept Christ means more than a willingness to accept the blessings which accompany and follow such acceptance. It means that with a change of masters there comes also a change of service. It means that we accept His teachings, and that His interests become our interests. Following are a few of the

REASONS WHY WE SHOULD BE IN HIS ACTIVE SERVICE

1. *Christ purchased us with His own precious blood.* This fact alone should be enough to bind our grateful hearts to Him forever. We say "thank you" when a friend does us a kindness. When some one does us a great favor, our gratitude follows him all our lives. Now here is a Friend who did for us what we could not do for ourselves, nor any one else could do

for us. He snatched us from the power of Satan and the torments of hell, and saved us for the glory world. That man who is not touched with this evidence of divine compassion, and refuses to follow in the footsteps of our dear Redeemer, must be hard-hearted indeed.

If we are God's faithful servants, we have surrendered our all to Him, and can not serve Him in a half-hearted way, as the following texts will show:

"No man can serve two masters....Ye can not serve God and mammon."

"Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

These references make it clear that our whole service belongs to God. The only consistent place for the redeemed is in the service of the Redeemer.

2. Christian work carries with it a double blessing; (1) *It is upbuilding to ourselves.* (2) *It is upbuilding to others.*

No one has ever engaged in earnest Christian work without becoming more firmly established in the principles of the Gospel and without receiving deeper insight into the mysteries of God's word. The character of the work shapes the character of the worker. Labor is never lost on others. Though we may not see immediate results of our labors, some day, in some way,

which God alone may know, these labors will bring fruit. Every act of worship, every word of admonition, every prayer, and every other deed connected either directly or indirectly with Christian work, will in time yield its fruits, either in strengthening or encouraging the converted, or in convicting the unsaved, possibly leading them to conversion.

3. *The Bible demands our service.* Many scriptural quotations might be given, but one from our Savior will suffice: "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, can not be my disciple." Without faithful service, one may be a church-member, but never a member of God's family.

DIVERSITY OF GIFTS FOR DIVERS KINDS OF WORK

The Bible speaks of a diversity of gifts. There is also a diversity of work. Because we are not all active in the same line of work, let us not accuse one another of indifference. Some people who are very much interested in certain lines of work imagine that everybody else must be alike interested in the same lines. Suppose that would be the case. The result would be that the united energies of all Christendom would be devoted to one thing, while everything else would be neglected. We need preachers, teachers, Sunday school workers, mission workers, editors, commentators, and workers in various

other fields. God has wisely provided for these varied wants by endowing His people with a diversity of gifts. Some are especially gifted in public speech, some for praying, some for writing, some for charitable work, some for business management, some for distributing literature, some for mission work, some for personal work among members, some for personal work among the unsaved, some for other purposes. All these gifts can be used to the glory of God when consecrated to His service. Happy the church which seems to locate these gifts, and apply them where they may be most effective.

DO WHAT YOU CAN

We may excuse ourselves in not exercising the gifts mentioned above, but we dare not excuse ourselves for not exercising the gifts with which God has endowed *us*. There is no limit to Christian work. Some can do more than others. We can all do what we can. Whenever we can give to God an acceptable reason for all that we do, and for leaving undone the things we do not do, we have done our share in the Christian service. God rewards *faithfulness* rather than *amount* in labor. The woman who poured out the oil of spikenard upon the head of the Savior could not preach like the apostles; she could not win popular applause by remarkable deeds or commanding intelligence; but she

could sit at the feet of her Savior and do Him homage, and as such she won the plaudit which meant more than the most princely fortune this world has ever known. "She hath done what she could," is the recognition which each should seek from the lips of our Savior.

The surest test of acceptable Christian service is faithfulness in little things. We want to be obedient not only to the great commandments, but also to those commandments which the average individual counts too small to be noticed. No commandment which God considered of sufficient importance to find a place in His Book is too small to be noticed. The most insignificant thought in the Bible is of greater importance than the greatest thought outside the Bible. Faithfulness from the smallest to the greatest things is the standard which every one should seek. Secret prayer, the power of which is so little recognized, careful study of the Bible, preparation of Sunday school lessons, kindness to dumb animals, kindness to neighbors, kindness to the poor, kindness to children and care for spiritual instruction, care for and comfort of the aged, consideration for the feelings of others, carefulness in what we say, care for the sick, faithfulness in keeping promises, faithful attendance at church services, faithfulness in spending money for that which is useful, an occasional word to the unconverted, excellent

deportment in society, a good moral character—these are among the things which constitute the ideal Christian worker.

NECESSITY FOR CHRISTIAN WORK

It requires no special revelation to establish the fact that the active service of every professed child of God is needed in the great conflict now going on between the forces of sin and of righteousness. See the wickedness now in the world! Look at those bound to you by ties of kinship, wrapped in the bondage of sin! See our boasted Christian land spending more money for tobacco, whiskey, pride and foolishness than for all the necessities of life! See the world spending infinitely more time and money in pursuit of worldly pleasure than in the support of the Gospel! See the crowded condition in our jails, penitentiaries, lunatic asylums, saloons, gambling dens and dens of infamy! See the marks of sin stamped upon the countenances of many calling themselves Christians! See the cowardice of whole churches who crouch and cower before the ridicule of the world, and sell their consciences, purity and piety that they might have the friendship of the world! See the hundreds of millions of souls in heathendom, going down to Christless graves without even a knowledge of the Bible! See the thousands of Christian professors living in luxury, and consuming

upon their own lusts the things which ought to be put to better use; when they ought to be engaged in earnest endeavor to rescue those who are starving for want of the Bread of Life! See all this, and you see a portion of the picture which our Savior saw when He sacrificed His all that man might be redeemed! See all this, and you will stop consulting your own ease, but will, like the Savior, labor in the all-important work of "rescuing the perishing" from the struggling mass of sinking humanity! See all this, and the conviction will be forced upon you that whether in sickness or in health, in shadow or in sunshine, in adversity or in prosperity, at home and abroad, EVERY CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE A WORKER FOR JESUS.

CONCLUSION

We have now come to a point where we must close our talk and bid farewell to all who may have been interested in the thoughts presented. We may be thousands of miles apart, but the fact that we are animated with one common hope in a common Lord, places us side by side in one common cause.

This life is a pilgrimage. This world is not our home. Our citizenship is in heaven. The great Captain of our salvation is watching our tottering steps, holding out before us the glorious light of the Gospel, shielding us against the fiery darts of the evil one, and encouraging us on our onward march. In many a clime there may be heard the tramp of weary pilgrims, surrounded by trials and temptations, subject to heartaches and disappointments, assailed by the arrows of sin; but cheered by the presence of the Holy Comforter, and thrilled with hopes of immortal glory.

While on our pilgrimage, let us be sure that we remain on the right road. Let us "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good." Let right prevail, regardless of cost. Let us remember that we have not man, but God, as our judge.

Let us not look to man for license to do what we know to be wrong before God. It often causes a struggle to resist the allurements of sin; but what struggle will not gladly be endured for the sake of Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Let nothing swerve us from our determination to follow the path of Jesus as God gives us light. Let God have our service, and time and eternity will show the wisdom of our choice.

But there comes a time when our pilgrimage will be over. When we have answered the purpose of our creation; when our last battle will have been fought; when we shall have had our last earthly joy or sorrow; when we shall be done meeting and parting; when our last farewell will have been said, our hopes will brighten into a living reality, and our hearts be filled with unspeakable joy as we hear the summons, "Come up higher." What a blessed hour that will be when all the faithful will hear the words, "Come, ye blessed of my Father!" How glorious to meet around the Throne above, mingle our voices with the voices of the heavenly hosts, and join in one continuous praise through all eternity!

Brethren,—sisters,—what rejoicing,
When we stand before the King;
Where ten thousand angel voices
Through the vaults of heaven ring.

O the sight of heavenly mansions!
O the brilliant light of day!
How the music there inspires us!
How enchanting every way!

How the bright, celestial city,
Built on Canaan's happy shore,
Rises in majestic splendor!
There we'll dwell forever more.

Then with bodies all celestial,
And with robes as white as snow,
We shall join the heavenly chorus,
Often longed for here below.

Weary pilgrim, heavy laden,
Often tried for all your worth,
Would you sell the joy of heaven
For the glittering things of earth?

Seek not wealth nor fame nor pleasure,
Vain they've proved ofttimes before;
Seek the golden fields of Canaan,
There to dwell forevermore.

APPENDIX

SCRIPTURE TEXTS

OBEDIENCE

1. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.—Jno. 15:14.

2. If ye love me, keep my commandments.—Jno. 14:15.

3. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him.—Jno. 14:21.

4. And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.—I Sam. 15:22.

5. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.—I Jno. 5:3.

6. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.—Jas. 1:22.

7. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than man.—Acts 5:29.

8. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.—I Jno. 2:3.

9. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.—I Jno. 2:4.

10. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.—Eccl. 12:13.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

1. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.—Matt. 5:16.

2. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.—I Pet. 3:15, 16.

3. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that can not be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.—Tit. 2:7, 8.

4. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.—I Tim. 4:12.

5. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.—Eph. 4:25.

6. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.—I Jno. 1:7.

7. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.—I Cor. 8:13.

8. Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me

and my words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.—Mark 8:38.

9. That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.—Phil. 2:15.

10. For ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.—Eph. 5:8.

IN THE HOME

1. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.—Matt. 19:5, 6.

2. But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.—I Tim. 5:8.

3. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.—Eph. 5:25.

4. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.—Eph. 5:22.

5. Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.—Prov. 22:6.

6. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—Eph. 6:4.

7. Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and thy mother;

which is the first commandment with promise.—Eph. 6:1, 2.

8. And if a house be divided against itself, that house can not stand.—Mark 3:25.

9. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?—I Tim. 3:5.

10. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.—Eph. 5:33.

IN THE CHURCH SERVICE

1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.—Ps. 122:1.

2. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.—Ps. 29:2.

3. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.—Heb. 10:25.

4. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit: speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.—Eph. 5:18-21.

5. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—Eph. 4:13.

6. Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house

of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.—Eccl. 5:1.

7. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.—Matt. 5:6.

8. The wicked are overthrown, and are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.—Prov. 12:7.

9. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.—Jno. 4:24.

10. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.—Phil. 4:8.

IN SOCIETY

1. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.—I Cor. 10:31.

2. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.—II Tim. 2:16.

3. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.—II Tim. 2:22.

4. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.—I Cor. 15:33.

5. Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.—Eph. 4:29.

6. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.—Ex. 20:8.

7. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.—Tit. 2:12.

8. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries; wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.—I Pet. 4:3, 4.

9. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.—Rom. 14:19.

10. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.—Gal. 5:9.

IN BUSINESS

1. Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.—Matt. 7:12.

2. It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone is way, then he boasteth.—Prov. 20:14.

3. The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.—Prov. 20:7.

4. Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord.—Prov. 20:10.

5. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?—II Cor. 6:14.

6. And whatever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.—Col. 3:17.

7. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.—Rom. 12:17.

8. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.—Col. 3:9.

9. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.—Phil. 2:4.

10. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.—Matt. 6:33.

STUDY OF THE BIBLE

1. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.—II Tim. 3:16.

2. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.—Jno. 5:39.

3. These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.—Acts 17:11.

4. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. —Jas. 1:19.

5. And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ.—II Tim. 3:15.

6. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.—Matt. 11:29.

7. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart

all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons.—Deut. 4:9.

8. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.—II Tim. 2:15.

9. That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.—Luke 1:4.

10. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.—I Tim. 4:13.

LIBERAL GIVING.

1. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.—II Cor. 9:7.

2. But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.—II Cor. 9:6.

3. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.—Prov. 11:25.

4. Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.—Matt. 6:1.

5. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.—I Cor. 16:2.

6. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?—Mark 8:36.

7. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for

many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.—Luke 12:18-21.

8. He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.—Prov. 19:17.

9. He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse. —Prov. 28:27.

10. Bring ye all the tithes unto the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.—Mal. 3:10.

THAT "UNRULY MEMBER"

1. A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.—Prov. 18:7.

2. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.—Jas. 1:26.

3. Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.—Ps. 34:13.

4. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.—I Pet. 3:10.

5. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.— Prov. 15:2.

6. A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.—Prov. 16:28.

7. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.—Tit. 3:9.

8. Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come to see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.—Phil. 1:27.

9. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.—Eph. 4:29.

10. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.—Matt. 12:36.

HOLD YOUR TEMPER

1. A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.—Prov. 15:1.

2. He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.—Prov. 14:17.

3. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.—Matt. 5:39.

4. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.—Rom. 12:19.

5. Fret not thyself because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the wicked; for there shall be no reward to the evil man; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.—Prov. 24:19, 20.

6. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.—Eccl. 7:9.

7. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.—Col. 3:8.

8. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.—Eph. 4:31.

9. He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.—Prov. 16:32.

10. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.—Jas. 3:14-16.

SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT

1. Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.—Prov. 16:18.

2. He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction. —Prov. 17:19.

3. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—Luke 18:14.

4. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace unto the humble.—Jas. 4:6.

5. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.—Acts 12:21-23.

6. Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.—I Pet. 3:3, 4.

7. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?—Mark 8:36.

8. A man's pride shall bring him low: but honor shall uphold the humble in spirit.—Prov. 29:23.

9. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.—Luke 16:15.

10. There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: * * * * * * the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.—Luke 16:19-25.

SELF-DENIAL

1. And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.—Mark 8:34.

2. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and

come after me, can not be my disciple.—Luke 14:27.

3. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.—Luke 9:24.

4. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.—Rom. 12:1.

5. By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. —Heb. 11:24, 25.

6. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.—Jas. 4:10.

7. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.—Heb. 12:11.

8. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.—Phil. 2:8, 9.

9. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.—Rom. 14:21.

10. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.—Gal. 6:14.

THE SABBATH

1. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.—Ex. 20:8.

2. Speak thou also unto the children of Israel,

saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.—Ex. 31:13.

3. And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath; therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.—Mark 2:27, 28.

4. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.—Acts 20:7.

5. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.—Rev. 1:10.

6. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.—Heb. 4:9.

7. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?—Luke 6:9.

8. If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.—Isa. 58:13, 14.

9. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; but keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.—Isa. 56:2.

10. Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.—I Cor. 10:31.

PRAYER

1. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.—Jas. 5:16.

2. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.—Matt. 6:5.

3. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.—Matt. 6:6.

4. Pray without ceasing.—I Thess. 5:17.

5. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.—I Thess. 5:18.

6. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.—Luke 11:9.

7. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.—Jas. 1:6.

8. I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. —I Tim. 2:8.

9. Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.—Mark 11:24.

10. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.—Luke 11:13.

EVERY CHRISTIAN A WORKER

1. Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.—Luke 10:2.

2. He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.—Luke 11:23.

3. No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon.—Matt. 6:24.

4. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness.—Rom. 6:16.

5. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant.—I Cor. 7:22.

6. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.—I Cor. 6:20.

7. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Eph. 6:12.

8. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.—Jno. 9:4.

9. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.—Tit. 3:8.

10. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.—Mark 16:15.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION

The best way to get rid of a foe is to make a friend of him.

* *

It costs something to practice self-denial. It costs more not to practice it.

* *

They who "look up" will realize from heart experience that God is also looking down.

* *

"Man usually measures man by his reputation; but God measures man by his character."

* *

If some people will be as sleepy in heaven as they now are during church-services, they will miss many an angelic anthem.

* *

Don't be too free with your advice. As a rule "advice is cheap," but it is not always the cheapest things that are the best.

* *

It is good to be able to convince the world that we are good Christians. By and by it will be still better if God also can be convinced of this fact.

* *

"Money is an article of exchange used to purchase anything but peace and pardon, and can be used as a means of transportation to any country but heaven."

The man who has a habit of speaking of his fellowman in an accusing, fault-finding way, usually reflects the condition of his inner self, and merely judges other people by his own standard.

* *

"Our influence is such that almost every moment of our lives we tread upon chords that vibrate through all eternity—either through the bright regions of heaven or through the dark caverns of hell!"

* *

Make your path bright by laying hold of the promises of God by faith and borrowing some of the sunlight of heaven. Not only does this fill your soul with cheer, but it illuminates your pathway and saves you from many a tumble.

* *

It is easier to drift down the stream than to row against the current; yet every moment of drifting means a greater distance from the fountain head of the stream. Sinners should reflect that every moment of drifting takes them farther away from the Fountain of Living Waters.

* *

In comparing the Bible with human philosophy, we meet with many contrasts. Here is one of them:

"A little nonsense, now and then,
Is relished by the wisest men."
—Human philosophy.

"The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."
—Bible.

* *

Some people excuse themselves for not doing as well as they know, on the ground that there is too much humanity about them to do so. Did it ever

occur to them that there is too much humanity about them to enter heaven? "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, can not be my disciple."

* *

Sinners have no reason for remaining in the service of Satan because they imagine that there are some hypocrites in the churches. Neither has any church a right to sit down at ease while many of her members are an actual stumbling-block to them that are without. Let our prayers and our energies be exerted to the end that the church may be made and kept pure.

* *

Man may be compared to a fountain pen; the tongue is to the head what the pen is to the fountain. Keep the fountain filled, and the pen does good work. Let the fountain get empty, and the pen is worthless. Keep the head well filled with useful knowledge and noble thoughts, and the tongue does admirable work. Let the head get empty, and the empty rattle of the tongue will soon reveal it.

* *

It would be a grand thing if every true Christian could clearly comprehend that there may be religious toleration without false liberalism. God endowed man with talents, and left him free to use these talents as he sees fit. Yet, while God as a rule never forcibly interferes with man in the misuse of his talents, we have many evidences that he is displeased with sin in any of its forms, and never compromises with it. The religion of Jesus Christ is in harmony with this plan. We should never attempt, by carnal force, to put an end to false creeds or heretical doctrines; neither should we ever in

any way compromise with them. "Higher criticism," "universalism: or any other "ism" which compromises the truth of God's word, should be classed as infidelity (which they really are), and the adherents of such doctrines held as enemies to the cause of true religion. God's word is pure, and should never be adulterated by any wisdom not divine. The cause of Christ invariably suffers from compromises.

* *

Sinners, upon being asked why they do not give their hearts to God, frequently compare themselves either with persons whom they imagine to be much more contaminated with sin than themselves, or with some unfaithful church member who, they declare, is much worse than themselves. There are two facts however, which they generally overlook:

1. In drawing the comparison, they are apt to favor themselves.

2. It is by no means settled that the persons with whom they compare themselves are saved.

"They measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."

* *

While God's word is yea and amen forever, and can never be affected by human opinion however wise, it is not so with our own ideas. Our religious ideas should be immovable, only when they are established by a "thus saith the Lord," and this "thus saith the Lord" is so unmistakably plain that we can not be mistaken. When once settled by the immutable word of God, let no human wisdom persuade us to believe that possibly the Lord did not mean what he said. But when our ideas were fixed by our own reasonings or observations, let us re-

member that others have minds equal to or greater than our own, and that it is altogether possible that we are mistaken. The cause of Christ has been made to suffer much because men have tried to compress the Bible between the narrow walls of their own temples. False liberalism on the one hand, and religious bigotry on the other—together with the unscrupulous designs of uncoverted men in the church—are largely responsible for the many religious denominations of today.

* *

I like to see a man with positive religious convictions. You can depend upon a man like that; for you always know where to find him. Neither wealth nor ease nor popularity will lure him away from what he believes to be right; for he is a man of conviction, and not of policy. Such a man is not necessarily a religious bigot, nor need he subscribe to that tiny-brained view that salvation is obtained through the particular church denomination of which he happens to be a member. Yet you always find him closely attached to his own church, and firmly of the opinion that the church to which he belongs is as near (if not nearer) the teaching of the Gospel as any church of which he knows. When once he is convinced that another denomination stands nearer to the teaching of the Gospel than his own, he does not hesitate to make the change. With him, church membership is a matter of conscience; and, without crying down other churches, he dearly loves his own. The man who can be a Methodist, a Presbyterian, a Mennonite, a Dunkard, a Baptist, or something else, just as it happens to suit, is a religious mongrel whom heaven pities and earth contemns.

When we hear people talking about doing their share in Christian work, we conclude at once that they are measuring themselves by the wrong standard. The great work to be accomplished is the salvation of the whole human race. To this end, Christ gave His all—even His life. We do our share when we imitate Him; not when we measure our piety, contributions, and personal work by what the average church member does. To follow in the footsteps of our Savior may not cost us all our comfort; it may not take all our earthly possessions; it may not cost us all our friends; it may not cost us our natural lives; but all these should be laid upon the altar of the Lord, ready to be offered up if called upon. By personal work, we encourage those among whom we labor. By giving of our means, we stir others to action. By prayer, we move the hand of God. In either line, the greater the sacrifice, the more far-reaching the results. Strange as it may seem to those who are inclined to look out strictly for themselves, it is nevertheless true that the more completely self is abandoned in Christian work, the more thoroughly self will be cared for, and the more complete will be the exaltation. May God have our undivided service, and may we be content with present blessing and ultimate glory.

(The End)

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